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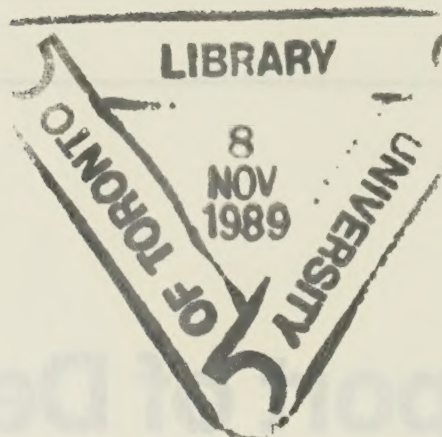
Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Thursday, May 21, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, May 21, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

ONTARIO HYDRO RATES IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Gordon moved resolution 11:

That in the opinion of this House, recognizing:

That Ontario Hydro, as a crown corporation, is to be used as a public policy tool in the service of the economic development of Ontario;

That northern Ontario has not enjoyed the economic boom currently being experienced in southern Ontario and has developed fundamental economic structural problems that must be addressed with imaginative and resourceful policymaking;

That longer winters in northern Ontario mean that northerners must consume more electricity and this, in turn, contributes substantially to the higher costs of living and doing business in northern Ontario;

That the Rosehart report on resource-dependent communities in northern Ontario identified higher energy costs resulting from harsher weather conditions as one of the key factors in the higher cost of doing business in the north;

That the challenge of economic renewal in the north must be addressed on all fronts because of its far-reaching social and economic benefits;

That lower hydro rates will help established northern resource industries to compete on a worldwide basis;

That lowering hydro rates in northern Ontario will stimulate the development of new industry and jobs for northerners;

That lowering hydro rates will return money to the pockets of ordinary northerners who pay more for energy;

Therefore, we call on the government of Ontario to develop a policy that uses Ontario Hydro as an instrument for the economic and social transformation of northern Ontario through the lowering of hydro rates in northern Ontario, thereby ameliorating the high costs of living and conducting business in the north.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for his windup.

Mr. Gordon: I want to make it clear this morning that this resolution represents another attempt at finding home-grown solutions to the economic problems that exist in northern Ontario.

Northerners have known for years that high energy costs not only play a major role in taking money out of the pockets of ordinary northerners but also, over the years, have dissuaded some industries, manufacturers, etc., from locating in the north. As a matter of fact, manufacturers have faced energy costs as high as 10 per cent and 20 per cent more than they would have expected to pay in the south. When they find this out, they decide that instead of locating somewhere in northern Ontario they are going to locate in an area such as Toronto.

In my view, we have for years—and this government is as guilty of it as any—approached the symptoms of the economic problems in the north rather than looked at the strategic, structural problems that exist there. It is my view that the time has come to come up with a clear policy, a clear way in which this government can help the north to attain the same type of economic stability and opportunity that we see here in southern Ontario.

To date, there have been a few in the north who from time to time have pointed out that one of the ways in which the north can be helped is through the lowering of hydro rates, but it was not until just last week that the regional chairman for Sudbury, Tom Davies, started a campaign, and quite rightfully so, to see that hydro rates were lowered in northern Ontario. To their credit, the regional chairman and his council have initiated a campaign that is now spreading throughout northern Ontario. This Legislature and this government can expect to hear much more about this particular issue over the coming months.

As I indicated at the beginning, one of the fundamental problems is those of us who live and work in the north know that the high cost of energy has a direct effect on job opportunities for our people. The solution that would make northern Ontario competitive with southern

Ontario would be the lowering of hydro rates. That is not an earth-shattering idea, is it? I can see the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) over there smiling benignly. Of course we do not want him to give us a benign look—at least not of benign neglect. What we want is his intervention at the cabinet table to see that this idea, which is approaching the problem of structural unemployment in the north with an innovative solution, such as lowering of hydro rates, is something that should be discussed at that table and should be given every consideration. Of course I know he is going to push for it to go through.

Nevertheless, we in the north are tired of being ripped off. We are tired of seeing our people without jobs. We are calling upon the government today to recognize that for too long there have been two Ontarios. For those members who are not aware of the two Ontarios, I might point out that there is the prosperous south where at the present time unemployment is only 4.7 per cent, where every few months we see automobile plants or parts plants being established, and where in the past 18 months alone 75,000 new jobs have been created in the finance sector.

Then there is the other Ontario, which the Premier (Mr. Peterson) wants to drag into the space age by making us high-tech hewers of wood and water; the other Ontario, which is still struggling through a recession, which has an unemployment rate of 13 per cent and which has lost 20,000 jobs in the past two years. That is the other Ontario. There can be no mistake about it: northern Ontario is quite unlike the south.

If the government is still not convinced, let me draw another mental picture of what is going on in the north, and it is not a pretty picture. I see a few of the government members have taken this opportunity to step out of the legislative room. Perhaps it is a picture they do not want to be reminded of, but we pay a price in the north for this underdevelopment in terms of family violence, family breakdown and mental stress. It is no more appealing to us than it is to the government.

Northern Ontario makes up 87 per cent of the territory of this great province. It contains nine per cent of the population and eight per cent of the labour force; but also 11 per cent of all Ontario's unemployed, 73 per cent of all mining unemployed and 70 per cent of all forestry unemployed. In the past six years, we have lost 26 per cent of our mining jobs. The number of unemployed in northern Ontario is nearly equal to that of Newfoundland and is actually greater

than the number of unemployed in Saskatchewan.

Our climate is harsher, requiring greater energy consumption, both residentially and industrially. There are longer distances between population centres, which of course results in isolation and high transportation costs, a subject we tried to address just a week ago. The majority of communities are dependent upon single-resource industries. The municipal tax base is much narrower than those of southern Ontario communities. As a result of that narrow industrial base, the participation rate of women in the work force is much lower than anywhere else in Ontario. In actual fact, secondary manufacturing throughout northern Ontario is almost negligible. The northern share of the provincial population has been declining over the past 30 years and the unemployment situation has been growing steadily worse. All the negative population, labour force and other economic and social trends are directly attributable to the north's dependence upon resource industries.

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Diminishing economic opportunity in labour force growth rates have seen northern Ontario's labour force grow by only 49 per cent since 1961. This compares poorly to the 91 per cent labour force growth rate for southern Ontario, 65 per cent for Prince Edward Island, 72 per cent for Quebec and 87 per cent for Canada as a whole.

In my view, and in the view of many people who live in the north, the key to ending northern Ontario's dependence upon the extractive industries and to freeing the people from the vicious boom-bust cycles we have experienced over the past years would be the lowering of hydro rates in northern Ontario. This is one way in which we can work to diversify northern Ontario.

This is not to say we should ignore the traditional resource-based industries. In fact, their competitive position needs to be improved in order to protect existing jobs in this area as well as to create new jobs.

The lowering of hydro rates for northern Ontario would be a catalyst to economic development for the entire north. It would mean that for the first time we would be doing something concrete to ensure that more manufacturing jobs moved into the north. That is the key to the future economic development of northern Ontario.

Let us take an example of that. Northern Quebec has been experiencing quite a boom of new industries moving into northern Quebec. One of the chief reasons for that has been that the Quebec government has been following a policy

of providing better hydro rates for those firms that locate in the northern part of Quebec. This is a policy, and this is the kind of policy this government here in Toronto, in Queen's Park, should be putting into place, and this is a policy that was sadly lacking in the throne speech. This is a policy that showed no evidence of being anywhere in that budget that was brought down yesterday.

In northern Quebec at the present time, there are 53—count them; 53—new industries because the provincial government has instituted a policy of lower hydro rates in northern Quebec. These are high-tech industries. These are industries that provide jobs, labour-intensive jobs, for many Quebecers. I can see no reason why this government could not take similar policy steps.

To ask that Ontario Hydro's rates be lowered as a means to ameliorate some of the most outrageous inequalities between northern and southern Ontario and as a means of spurring the economic development of the north is not a new or radical idea in itself. I want to stress that; it is not a new or radical idea in itself.

Let us go back to November 3. I am sure the government members on the other side can remember November 3, 1986, at, I believe, the Holiday Inn in Sault Ste. Marie. There was a conference on northern competitiveness. At that conference, the Premier said, "We have to look at Ontario Hydro as a development tool." He further said, "I invite you to use your creativity in that regard, because Ontario Hydro's instructions are to work with local people, work with entrepreneurs and work with the north to build a stronger economic base here."

That is exactly what this motion does, so I am sure the government members on the other side will heed the Premier's words today and will be voting for this motion unanimously.

I would also like to quote a well-known columnist in the Toronto area, and that is Rosemary Speirs. In one of her insightful columns, she wrote, "Northern and eastern Ontario are not sharing in that prosperity today, and that raises the question of whether cheaper hydro rates or Hydro projects should be used to promote regional economic development." Yes, Rosemary, we are asking that question today here in the Legislature.

The connection between cheap energy and economic prosperity is well established. There is a high correlation between energy consumption and employment opportunities. That is a well-known fact in Ontario, and we have to go no further than the current chairman of Ontario

Hydro to be reminded of it. Tom Campbell, chairman of Ontario Hydro, told the Legislature's select committee on energy only two years ago, and again I would like to quote the eminent Mr. Campbell:

"Electricity has always been a building block of our economy and it plays an even more significant role today. It has helped businesses convert to lower-cost and more efficient processes, to remain competitive and to preserve jobs." Then he added, and I think this is particularly significant for the government, "Its reliability and reasonable rates have been a factor in industries choosing to locate in Ontario."

I sat on that select committee on energy, and every time the Hydro people appeared before us the one point they kept making about Ontario Hydro and its effect on attracting industry or keeping industry in Ontario was the fact that it was so competitive and its rates were so good. Why cannot we in the north have some of those good rates? What is wrong with us? Why do we have to put up with a further 20,000 people being unemployed over the past two years? Why can we not share in some of the prosperity?

Why does this government walk out on the streets and say: "We located 280 new government jobs in Sudbury. Look what a great thing we have done." My goodness, does the government not know that only a few short years ago the federal government put 2,500 jobs into Sudbury? The government gives us 280 civil service jobs that blue-collar people cannot do; blue-collar people do not work in civil service jobs.

That is it in a nutshell: Tom Campbell saying, "Its reliability and reasonable rates have been a factor in industries choosing to locate in Ontario." I think the members of this Legislature should note that Inco Ltd. has begun a \$25-million project at its Crean Hill mine. It is all electrically run, and that is the wave of the future for mining. If we want to help the resource industries as well as attract manufacturing into the north, then the time has come to ensure that hydro rates are lowered in the north.

We are not asking for handouts. We are tired of being turned into a banana republic in the north. We see we are being turned into a third world; there is the other Ontario and it is us. There is no reason for it. Lower the hydro rates. Give us a chance to compete on an equal footing with the rest of Ontario and the rest of the world, and give our people something to hold on to.

The Deputy Speaker: The member wishes to reserve five minutes and 50 seconds for his windup, I believe.

Mr. Foulds: I rise to support the resolution, although I have some mixed feelings. It is the classic case where one has to divest oneself of one's sort of argumentum ad hominem; that is, the argument against the person. I really do think that in 42 years, when the Tories had power, they could have brought some control over Ontario Hydro to make sure Ontario Hydro was an instrument for regional development, particularly in the north, and they failed to do so. However, there is nothing like a good healthy dose of opposition to make a former government party realize how important hydro development is in economic development.

In developing nations, one of the first cries—for example, when India got its independence from the British Empire, the two main planks in the platform were electrification and education. Those symbolized both the hardware and the software, the social services and the hardware services that were necessary to bring that nation into the 20th century.

I do not say that the north is not in the 20th century. It certainly is. It is into the 1980s good and properly, partly because the former Tory government failed to deal with the structural problems in the economy of the north. While I support this resolution and think it will go a small way to helping the economic development in the north, much more is needed.

Let me talk first about Hydro in northern Ontario. For years, northern Ontario business could not get the preferred commercial rate from Ontario Hydro for economic development. For years and years under the Tories that was true, and I say that has a lot to do with the underdevelopment of our industry in northern Ontario. It is something that must come.

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Second, I want to say that this government failed with Ontario Hydro when it refused to negotiate a contract with Manitoba Hydro for an assured power supply in northwestern Ontario. They could have got an assured power supply for centuries by upgrading transmission lines. I have on record a letter from the Manitoba Minister of Energy in the mid-1970s indicating that he was anxious for that assured power supply, which would have been hydro power and cheaper, and would have given us an assured economic development or helped to give us an assured economic development.

The government may say—and the Tories of the past always said—that Hydro was governed by the Power Corporation Act and therefore could not be used in the way we want it to be used

because it had to deliver power at cost. It depends on how you figure out that cost and it depends on how you figure out the customers and so on. A lot can be done with accounting to fiddle around with that, to put it very mildly.

Let me give credit to the former Tory government in one respect. They have used Ontario Hydro as an economic development tool in one case. My friend the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce) will know where that happened, and that is in the town of Atikokan, where they made a deliberate decision to place a thermal generating plant which was needed. It was not a gift, it was not something new, it was needed in the area and in the system. They decided to place it in Atikokan because Atikokan at that time was suffering an economic downturn. How much better it would have been if that plant had been planned for Atikokan in the first place, as we knew that the mine was running out.

I think a second part of the Hydro development in northern Ontario has to be the development of small power stations, mini stations. Hydro has to be condemned for assuming that all Ontario had to be part of this magnificent province-wide grid. I suggest that when it comes to the electrification of small villages like Armstrong, north of Lake Nipigon, it makes much more sense not to deliver, as it does now, very expensive diesel power, but to throw a small generator into a small stream near that village and simply draw the electric line from that generator to that village, instead of trying to plug it into the whole system.

We could do that in many small, remote villages in northern Ontario and do it quite effectively and inexpensively. That too would help the economic development of tourism in those areas. They would have cheaper hydro rates because it would be hydraulic power and not expensive diesel power and it would mean they could have more than mere residential electricity, which is all they have now at the very best. They are not able to have enough in their system to have either highly developed commercial activities or highly developed industrial activities.

The one part of Hydro's plan for economic development in the north that we want no part of is putting the nuclear waste into northern Ontario. That ain't, if I may say so, economic development. They are simply absolving themselves from the responsibility for the huge problem that is being created. The nuclear industry never knew how to get rid of nuclear waste; it still does not and it is trying to bamboozle the public on that point. If the storage

of nuclear waste is safe, then it should be stored near where the producing plants are. If it is safe, then it is safe near an established population as well as in a remote area of the province.

I just want to conclude with a couple of points. First of all, I note that it is very interesting that my good friend the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) is here to participate in the debate. I am sure he will participate with the usual vigour, emotion and heartfelt commitment that he has for the north.

But I regret very much that the new member of the Liberal Party from the north, the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay), who appeared to be so happy over the shafting the north took in the budget yesterday, is not here for this debate. I would have thought that, of any debate, the member for Timiskaming should be here participating in a debate that has to do with the economic development of northern Ontario and Ontario Hydro.

There are three or four other points that I would like to make without being too provocative. First, we need not merely the narrow kind of economic development that this resolution brings forward, but we need to develop a genuine heritage fund and not the kind of wishy-washy underfunded program that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) announced yesterday that will be at the pleasure of the government and at the pleasure of Queen's Park bureaucrats with the advice of Liberal-dominated economic advisory committees.

The member for Cochrane North should note that it is only advice; that is the thing. Those economic committees have no power, and I have to say to him that it is going to be the minister, his bureaucrats and his southern-Ontario-dominated cabinet that are going to make those final decisions. We need the kind of economic heritage fund that will be managed by northerners. It has to have the substance so that they can devise the tools to create their own solutions.

Second, we need the diversification of industry in many areas. If the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) were as sincere as he believes about energy prices, he would talk not only about bringing Ontario Hydro under control and giving better rates for northern Ontario but also about taking the private sector under public control, if not ownership, because natural gas and the distribution of natural gas in northern Ontario are a scandal.

What we should have for cheap power for heating and other purposes is a much better distribution system of natural gas throughout

northern Ontario, particularly to many of the one-industry towns. That would help not only industrial development but also with the bills northerners face because of the heating of their homes in remote communities with electricity, which is very expensive over a long period.

Finally, I want to say that I find it ironic that this motion is brought forward by a member of the Progressive Conservative Party, who was a member of government and who, if I may say so, did absolutely nothing when Premier Davis killed the select committee on Ontario Hydro after the Conservatives got their majority back in 1981. They tried to cover up the inadequacy of Hydro in terms of economic development and in terms of its nuclear imperialism.

Mr. Fontaine: C'était avec grand surpris ce matin que j'écoutais mon ami le député de Sudbury parler sur l'économie du nord de l'Ontario—l'économie qu'il dit vient d'arriver dans le nord de l'Ontario depuis deux ans. Je veux rappeler à mon ami de Sudbury que le nord de l'Ontario existe depuis au moins 100 ans et, si on est dans une situation économique très grave, c'est l'héritage du Parti conservateur.

C'est l'héritage dans le sens que, après la guerre, il n'y avait pas de division ou de décentralisation du sud de l'Ontario. Il n'y avait pas de décision d'amener au moins quelque partie de l'industrie de l'automobile, non plus de décision d'amener d'industrie de pièces de l'automobile. Plutôt, on a pris l'argent de l'industrie de nord de l'Ontario. Les ressources donnaient presque \$15 milliards—\$14.9 milliards d'argent—mais dans le tour, ça ne vaudrait rien.

Aujourd'hui, le député de Sudbury vient de nous parler d'une nouvelle vision du nord de l'Ontario. Mais, elle est tard, sa vision. La vision a dû être là après la guerre.

After the war, the division of northern Ontario from the rest of the province should have taken place. It is not my fault and it is not the fault of the Liberals that there was no decentralization of power and no decentralization of industry after the war. That was the previous government's fault. It did not even bring one industry, the automobile industry, to the north. It did not even bring one little part-industry to the north. Now that the Conservatives are in opposition, they say, "What is happening in the north?" It is happening because that is the heritage of that party to us in the north, to my children and my grandchildren. It has nothing to do with Hydro at this point.

They had their chance with Hydro in 1977. They had their chance all their lives with Hydro

and they did nothing for us. We suffered in the north. We in my little town were given hydro in 1956. Mr. Kelly came to us, and like a little baby we had to beg him, and he said, "I will give you a little hydro;" and after 50 years we had hydro in Hearst.

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That was the real test of that party. We were blinded by all the promises: a little school over here, a little airport over there and a little road over there; and that is it. If their vision of the north had been to bring other industry, then today we would not be in this economic situation. The situation did not happen in two years. It has happened over 42 years of history, not two years.

Mr. Gordon: You have done nothing, absolutely nothing.

Mr. Fontaine: The member said we did nothing about Hydro since I arrived over here. I had many meetings with Hydro. I will tell the member something. We recognize the economic problems experienced in the north.

Mr. Gordon: You have done absolutely nothing. All we have seen is—

Mr. Fontaine: Je dis au membre de laisser faire et lui dis de fermer sa gueule. Je veux lui parler. Il m'emporte, lui.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order. Voulez-vous, s'il vous plaît, retirer la remarque que vous avez faite vis-à-vis le député.

Mr. Fontaine: Quelle remarque?

Le président suppléant: De fermer sa gueule.

M. Fontaine: Je le retire.

For a few months we have been working on exploring, in connection with the other ministries, ways in which Ontario Hydro can be used as an instrument for promoting economic development in northern Ontario. Two weeks ago, the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) announced an advisory committee to study the matter we are talking about here today.

Mr. Gordon: Anything from that is two years down the road.

Mr. Fontaine: It will not take that long. There are people from the member's mining community; there is a woman, a native, on it. Last year, we formed another committee to study the Hydro grid on the Hudson Bay coast.

Another thing we are doing right now is we are working in conjunction with the pulp and paper industry to try to find out a way of cogeneration to produce 180 megawatts. At the same time, we are working with sawmills. We will be in the north, in Cochrane, on June 5, about a cogenera-

tion plant there; and there will be another one. We are looking at Longlac for cogeneration.

Another thing we are doing is we are working to try to keep our plants economical in northern Ontario. We are working with pulp and paper to find ways and means to give them a chance to build thermomechanical pulp or chemithermomechanical pulp. That is what we have been doing for a year.

At the same time we opened up the process to give a chance to the private entrepreneurs to be part of the hydro in northern Ontario, to use our rivers and build some smaller dams. They will not only produce hydro, but they are going to sell to Hydro. The Ministry of Energy has upped its rates to give a chance to the entrepreneur to survive. We tried that in Hearst in 1976 but Hydro killed us.

We spent over \$500,000 of government money. When it came to the end, Hydro told us in Hearst that the rate would not grow by more than 4.2 per cent. It is funny, after this project was crushed and the plant was shelved, the hydro went up nine per cent, 10 per cent, 8.2 per cent, until about two years ago when it went down four per cent. But they told us 4.2 per cent because they did not want us to build in Hearst.

We have spent \$500,000 of the government's money, plus another \$100,000 to \$200,000 from the industry and another \$1,000 from the town of Hearst. We spent close to \$800,000 on that project. It was a viable project. The report is still there in the files of the government. It is called the Hearst Hydro Project. The same project was used later in Chapleau, and now in Cochrane and maybe Longlac; but Hearst, no; Hydro did not want it.

We opened up the process for that kind of little industry; we opened up the process to the entrepreneur, the small guy, to build those hydros to give us more power and to try to give us a better rate there.

I agree with my friend the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) that we should change the act one of these days. I want to remind the member for Sudbury that the Conservatives had 42 years to change the act and they did not.

Mr. Gordon: This Liberal government has done nothing—all words, words.

Mr. Fontaine: We are not Quebec. Quebec has a different way with hydro. The member can ask his friends in the industry. Quebec is different. They negotiate rates, and I wish that Ontario would do the same thing. Maybe we will see it in a year, maybe we will see it in two years, but it is going to be a long process and it is going

to be up to us here in the House to do it. We must change the act. The act does not change like that; it is a law. I think we will have to work towards this.

I want to remind my honourable friend that northern Ontario was not born only two years ago. It is on account of his party's policy, when the Conservatives were in government, that we are stuck as we are right now. If they had had a vision about northern Ontario they should have given us hydro in 1940 or in 1935, and not, in my area, in 1956.

It has been the same thing with roads. They came to pave the roads in 1968 and after that they came back in 1982; that is all. Every 10 years they come back to give us a little thing. After that, they come here and tell me in the House that after two years it is our fault. It is going to take us more than two years to put northern Ontario on the right track. It is going to take 10 to 15 years.

Mr. Foulds: What?

Mr. Fontaine: I said 10 to 15 years.

Mr. Gordon: But the member will not be part of the government for 10 or 15 years.

Mr. Fontaine: The member knows that because he studied that. You cannot repair damage that fast. One thing we have to do is to work in a way that will enhance industry. I agree that Hydro is part of it. In my first speech in northern Ontario I said there were three things that should happen, using Hydro as a development tool. This speech by the member for Sudbury came from my first speech in northern Ontario. I discussed Hydro in Sault Ste. Marie, in Thunder Bay and in Kenora.

On my first trip using my \$100,000, I did not use the money to go on a fishing holiday as some ministers used to do, taking the government plane to go fishing on the lakes or go to the big town of Sutton River. I used that money to go to every little village in northern Ontario to listen to them and what they told me.

I told them that Hydro should be used as an economic tool and that our transportation system should be used as an economic tool. The government, with the help of my friends across from here, with the help of New Democratic Party ideas—I agree they gave me a few good ideas—is going to use that to give northern Ontario a better way. I support the resolution in principle.

Mr. Pierce: I do not know whether I can be quite as energetic as the member for Cochrane North, but I will certainly do my best to prepare myself for the debate and speak on behalf of the resolution moved by the member for Sudbury.

First, we have to clear away the myth that all the people in northern Ontario have hydro. What we are doing is arguing about the cost of hydro once it is provided. Since I was elected in 1985, I have had a fairly large file of people in northern Ontario who are without hydro. On a recent trip to Taiwan, travelling through some of the remotest, roughest and hilliest country any of us had ever experienced, you could look off in any direction and see lights that were servicing small individual homes in the mountains. That is not the case in northern Ontario.

Let me give just a small sampling of what it means to try to get hydro in northern Ontario. A single-parent mother has asked for service in her residence. She lives one mile away from the last hydro line. Ontario Hydro has responded to her request by saying: "There is no problem in servicing your property. It will require from you \$25,224.21. If you are having trouble, Ontario Hydro has an arrangement with the Royal Bank on bank-approved loans where up to \$10,000 can be loaned at an interest rate of 7.0 per cent." I am sure this is very comforting to this single-parent mother with two children who depends on nobody for anything but asks that she be given hydro service. This is part of the cost of hydro in northern Ontario.

I have another request for hydro service for 27 customers who border along a lake and who at present are not serviced by hydro. Hydro calculations to these 27 customers are that if they require hydro and they agree to enter into a signed agreement with Ontario Hydro, it will cost them individually \$19,684.

1040

When we talk about hydro rates, we also have to talk about inaccessibility to hydro. Previous speakers have talked about areas that do not have hydro and what it represents in the development of northern Ontario. Sawmill operators who are running off diesel generating plants at extremely high costs are not competitive with those who are sitting where hydro is available, they have to cut costs in other areas in order to make up the difference in the lack of hydro.

I will give members another example. A couple living in the northern part of my riding asked that Bell Canada provide telephone service on existing hydro lines. Bell Canada is not prepared to use the existing hydro lines because they are not tall enough and has asked the customers to install a new line at their own cost.

Another couple whose hydro line had deteriorated went to Ontario Hydro because they wanted to upgrade the service from 100-amp service to

200-amp service. Ontario Hydro's response was: "No problem. We will change the 30-foot poles to 40-foot poles. It will cost you \$294 plus provincial sales tax of \$20.64, for a total of \$315.45 for each pole replaced."

We are now in receipt of correspondence from Ontario Hydro in northern Ontario looking for line extension and an east-west tie line to bring eastern Ontario power to northern Ontario.

One of the earlier speakers, my colleague the member for Port Arthur, said Ontario Hydro had made one positive move in assisting economic development when it constructed the thermal generating plant in Atikokan. Ontario Hydro could make a second good economic move by increasing the size of the power generating plant in Atikokan.

He also talked briefly about the supply of power from Manitoba. Certainly, there is a supply of power. When I was at the mine in Atikokan as electrician we did not have assured power from Manitoba. I could bring out the old logbooks from the pelletizing plant and show members on record the power failures we experienced because we were dependent on hydro lines that went over some fairly rough terrain and were subject to a lot of damage in heavy storms.

Mr. Foulds: And they were inadequate.

Mr. Pierce: That is right. The lines were inadequate, the service was not assured service and there was a reluctance on the part of Ontario Hydro to upgrade the lines because of the nonassurance of the power being supplied by Manitoba.

Certainly, during the drought in northern Ontario, when the hydraulic plants were not producing power, all the coal-fired plants were up to maximum capacity and we suffered load rejection, which meant that the industry in northern Ontario was shut down because there was not enough power available. When we talk about moving industries into northern Ontario, it is not long before their experts look back into the records and find out what the guarantee of service is if you move out of the main core of Ontario.

When my colleague the member for Sudbury talks about two Ontarios, there is no question in the minds of the people of northern Ontario that we have two Ontarios. In talking to an editor of a local newspaper yesterday after the budget, he said to me, "Jack, the budget means one thing and one thing alone: if you have not already moved east it is time to move now." That is an editor of a local newspaper making that kind of

comment. That is indicative of what is happening in this province today.

We talk about low unemployment rates and again we have to talk about industrial development. Low unemployment rates exist in eastern Ontario. High unemployment rates exist in northern Ontario because there is not a commitment on the part of the government to make sure industrial development takes place in northern Ontario.

In order to encourage industrial development, we have to assure those industries that they will get the necessary services to make their industries work. Whether we do it by lower hydro rates, whether we do it by lower transportation costs, whether we do it by tax incentives or however we do it, it has to be done and it can only be done by government. Private industry is prepared to put up its money but it has to have a commitment on the part of the government.

I will be voting in favour of the resolution by the member. I applaud him for bringing this resolution forward. It is another step in identifying the problems that exist in northern Ontario today. They existed yesterday and they will be there tomorrow unless somebody has the political will to stand up in the cabinet and in Management Board of Cabinet and say: "Yes, gentlemen, we are going to do something about the problems in northern Ontario, and we are going to deal with them in this way: we are going to deal with them in a way that will encourage that industrial growth in northern Ontario."

Mr. Wildman: I rise to support the resolution. As a former member of the Advisory Committee on Resource Dependent Communities in Northern Ontario, as was the member for Rainy River and yourself, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about the need to see Ontario Hydro as an economic tool that could be used to stimulate growth in the north.

Members from southern Ontario must get a little bit tired of hearing northern members get up to talk about the serious problems we are experiencing in the north. I suppose they might sometimes be forgiven for thinking we are just a bunch of people who carp all the time and do not have positive suggestions to make.

This is one. This is a positive proposal for government action that could be taken to try to deal with the very serious economic problems we face.

The Rosehart committee did identify this as a serious problem, not just hydro rates but energy rates in general. Because of the harsher weather conditions and the greater distances in the north,

we have much higher costs. The committee made a number of suggestions for ways in which those costs could be lowered to help stimulate economic growth in our part of the province.

I participate in this debate with a feeling of disappointment, more in sadness than in anger, about the lack of commitment on the part of the government to northern Ontario.

In a sense, after listening to the budget of the Treasurer yesterday, we have a feeling that we have been left by this government to freeze in the dark in northern Ontario; either that or we pay a great deal more in an economic and social situation which is much worse than it is in southern Ontario where we have the economic boom.

There was no mention at all yesterday—not one mention—about energy costs in northern Ontario. There was no mention of hydroelectricity costs and there certainly was no mention of gasoline costs and the higher prices of gasoline we pay in northern Ontario, which has been a subject of debate from time to time in this House.

I anticipated that this government was at least going to say that because we have higher energy costs and higher gasoline prices in the north it would make an equivalent commitment for highway construction. Instead, it committed \$26 million for highway construction—about 40 miles of highway—in northern Ontario, which is less than half the extra amount we pay for gasoline because of higher prices.

In dealing with hydro costs, I agree with the member for Rainy River that we must deal with the question of service, not just rates, in northern Ontario. Many communities have hydro service, but it is inadequate. I think of the community of Hornepayne in my riding where, in the winter, people experience many outages of long duration and the hospital and other facilities in the community have to switch to Delco generators because they cannot get adequate service from the hydro that is supplied from Kapuskasing to Hornepayne.

Also, I think of a very small community in my riding, Aubrey Falls south of Chapleau, which is close to one of the largest Ontario Hydro hydraulic generating stations but does not have service. In order to obtain service across seven miles of territory from that generating station, Ontario Hydro says: "We would be quite happy to put in the line at your expense. We estimate it would cost about \$125,000 to put in the line." This government has no solution for that. The previous government had no solution either. So that community is dependent on diesel-fuel

generators for electricity at rates that are enormously high.

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We also have to deal with the question of rural rates. Members will recall that the previous government, after a lot of debate, said it was going to give a subsidy to Ontario Hydro so that it could lower the differential between what people in rural Ontario pay for electricity and what people in the towns and cities pay for electricity. They brought down the differential by about a half. Now that Ontario Hydro is applying for an increase, it is talking about a greater increase for rural customers than for urban customers.

The Liberal Party, when in opposition, argued against the differential. It has done nothing. There was no mention in the budget yesterday. There has been no mention from the Minister of Energy about at least equalizing electricity rates between rural Ontario and urban Ontario, much less dealing with the rates in northern Ontario by lowering them so that we can stimulate the economy of the north.

Listening to the budget yesterday, in my view it was a Conservative budget, a budget that could have been introduced by any former Tory Treasurer such as Darcy McKeough, the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson), or even the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman). It is a stand-pat budget. It does not do anything for northern Ontario. It purports to answer the problems of northern Ontario by establishing a heritage fund at such a low amount that one might as well forget about it. It is much less than half of what anyone would have expected.

I appreciate the comments made earlier by the member for Cochrane North, for whom I have a great deal of respect and affection. I consider him a friend. Since his removal from the cabinet I feel there obviously is a lack of a voice for northern Ontario in the government.

Since the Premier is the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, one might have expected there would have been a great deal of commitment by the government, at a time when it has so much more revenue because of the economic boom in southern Ontario, to actually deal with the problems of northern Ontario; but this government, in its budget, has failed completely. It is an indication that the northern voice on that side of the House is so weak that it is not listened to and not heard by this government.

As an opposition member, one might think, since we are perhaps going into an election campaign, I would be happy this government has

failed to respond to the north. I am not happy. I am disappointed because I thought we had a chance to respond to the serious economic problems of that other Ontario. This government has failed. Perhaps they decided there are not enough seats in the north and they do not have to worry about it. It means that northerners are going to continue to experience serious economic problems. If they would act on this resolution, at least it would be a step in the right direction.

Mr. Gordon: I guess what I find particularly disturbing about the government side is that the Premier of this province went into northern Ontario and said: "Look, I am here to listen to what you people have to say. What I am interested in are home-grown solutions to the problems you have. We think you are the people who should be telling us what you need in the north."

Do members know what happened? This is not fair, but do members know what they did? First of all, they heard from all the municipalities in northern Ontario, from the chambers of commerce, from ordinary people writing in, that the people of northern Ontario believed that the price of gas was too high, that we should have equality of gas prices between north and south. That is what the Premier was told.

Do members know what the Liberals did in their budget? They turned around and said: "We know you do not like high gas prices, but we, the government, believe after listening to you that we know better what is good for you. So you know what we are going to do? We are going to spend an additional \$26 million on roads in northern Ontario."

I heard the New Democratic Party member a few minutes ago saying he thought it was 40 miles. The average two-lane highway in northern Ontario right now runs between \$1.5 million and \$2 million a mile to build. So for \$26 million we are looking at 18 to 25 miles at most.

Not counting the rural roads in northern Ontario, we are talking about the main roads, we have probably 20,000 miles of major roads in northern Ontario. The Liberals are going to add 22 miles and people are going to have to continue to go around paying higher gas prices every time they go to the pumps. This is money that comes directly out of their pockets and they are not going to be able to spend it on the things they want to spend it on.

The Liberals say they are listening to the people in the north. They are not listening. They are not listening at all and it is not fair; it is not fair at all.

Let us take it one step further. Using Ontario Hydro as an instrument of economic and social policy makes good sense in this province. We have done that ever since we started Ontario Hydro in this province. We have used Ontario Hydro to create industry, to create more jobs for people. We see that here in southern Ontario. Yet when we ask for that here in this Legislature, we have to listen to the former minister, the member for Cochrane North, come out with a lot of drivel. He says: "We are looking into that. We are holding meetings; we are doing this; we are doing that."

Two years have gone by and nothing; there was not one word in the throne speech about doing anything about hydro rates in the north, not one single word. There was not one single word in the budget about doing something about hydro rates for northern people.

It is time this government quit putting Band-Aids on the north. It is time this government took a look at one of the root causes of the loss of jobs in the north. One of the root causes is the fact that our industries there are finding it more and more difficult to be competitive with the rest of Ontario, if not the rest of the world. It is time for the government to say: "Look, we are not going to put any more Band-Aids on the north. What we are going to do is attack those root causes. We are going to do something positive in our policy. We are going to equalize—we are going to do more than equalize we are going to lower hydro rates in northern Ontario."

This will attract manufacturing jobs into the north. We have seen it happen in Quebec already. We have seen 58 new firms move into Quebec; high-tech firms, firms that are creating employment, firms that are taking people off welfare, firms that are providing employment for people. Why should we have anything less?

Sometimes people say, "You northern members, all you do is cry; you want more; you are always asking." Look, we are always asking because there is a difference between north and south. There is a difference in prosperity. There is a difference in the standard of living. In northern Ontario people have a lower per capita income.

If we really want to help the north, we are going to take care of hydro rates. We are not going to put measures in budgets like the Liberals just did, where they say: "No, we cannot do anything about gas prices. That would put something back in the pockets of every northern Ontario citizen; we cannot do that. Instead, we

are going to give you about 20 more miles of road and you should be happy."

Just think about this. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines, the Premier, tells us in the north that tourism is going to be the big plus for northern Ontario. First, they are service jobs so they are low-paying jobs, but we are supposed to accept that. Second, he tells us the way to do that is by building more roads, so he gives us 20 more miles of highway and leaves gasoline prices the way they are.

Are the Liberals saying they have an economic plan for northern Ontario? They do not have an economic plan. It is time they started listening to some of their northern members. I am surprised the Premier has not already but that is what happens. We get all these people elected from other parts of Ontario and all these other voices drown out the voices from the north. It is time to lower those hydro rates in the north.

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CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Harris moved resolution 8:

That in the opinion of this House, recognizing the historic agreement in principle reached at Meech Lake with respect to Canada's Constitution and recognizing that the details of the agreement have not yet been determined or finalized, the government of Ontario should not ratify the agreement until such time as a committee of this House conducts open, public hearings on this important issue and its impact on transfer payments, immigration programs and the change in federal-provincial relations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr. Harris: I am pleased to have the opportunity to introduce this resolution today and also to speak to it.

While we appreciate the importance of parliamentary debate in contributing to the constitutional process, our party maintains it is essential that the voices of experts, of interest groups which may be greatly affected by this accord, and of individual Ontarians be heard and that they be placed on official record through the process of public hearings.

I suggest this is similar to what is going on right now on this very same issue in Manitoba and similar to what is going on right now on this issue in Quebec. I find it inconceivable that the government of Ontario would not consider this to

be of sufficient importance to allow some public input here in Ontario.

We are not suggesting these public hearings have to go on for three years or two years or one year. We are suggesting there are key groups and key individuals who should be given an opportunity to come before this Legislature and give their opinion.

The purpose of this resolution, then, is to call upon the government of Ontario to hold public hearings on an initiative we feel, in the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, will have great implications for this province.

First, I would like to make it very clear that we are not against the Meech Lake accord in principle, and we have stated that. Rather, we are in fact pleased that an agreement has taken place and we welcome the spirit of national unity in which this accord was fostered.

However, we are concerned about certain aspects of the accord, ones which we anticipate will alter the way Ontario's affairs are planned and implemented with respect to not only provincial policies but also those of national significance. Ontarians have concerns, not only as to how ratification of the Meech Lake accord will affect our province but also as to how it will affect Canada as a nation.

Because of the challenges which lie ahead, we feel public input is necessary before the final agreement is signed in the upcoming weeks. Simply put, we in the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario want the public to have the opportunity to come in, to hear the deal, to study the draft wording and to comment upon it.

Considering the concerns aired by various interests in recent days, both federally and provincially, we feel public input would be helpful to the process, would allow all of us to better understand the agreement and would allow a lot of groups that might have some comments on it to participate in the process in a free and democratic way.

We know now that specific concerns have been raised regarding the recognition of Quebec as a distinct society, immigration policy, Supreme Court appointments, spending powers and Senate reform.

Let us look at Quebec as a distinct society. Section 1(b) of the accord recognizes "that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society." This phrase can be subject to different interpretations by individuals, courts and governments, and the people of Ontario really should have an opportunity to make their position known.

For example, does the constitutionally enshrined phrase "distinct society" afford Quebec quasi-national status because the majority of its residents are French-speaking? If so, what does this mean for national broadcasting? What does it mean for minority language rights in Quebec and the rights of non-English-speaking and non-French-speaking Canadians in Quebec?

If the Constitution of Canada is to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the existence of Quebec as a distinct society, what influence could this have on the interpretation of the other sections of the Constitution? What constraints could this impose on the ability of the Parliament of Canada to serve and legislate for all Canadians? Could the preservation and promotion of Quebec's distinct society come in conflict with freedom-of-expression guarantees in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms? These are some of the questions the public is asking.

On immigration: Ontarians want to express their views on the subject of immigration outlined in the Meech Lake accord. Will the provisions on immigration provide for different immigration rules for each province? Will freedom of movement within Canada for new arrivals be diminished? This is a very important consideration. Will people be arbitrarily forced to one province or will a unification of families be frustrated by that provision based on individual provinces setting their own immigration policies? Would Ontario ever adopt measures similar to the Cullen-Couture agreement on Quebec on the selection of independent immigrants, visitors for medical treatment, students and temporary workers? We need to hear about this from the Premier (Mr. Peterson), and the public surely has a right to comment.

Supreme Court appointments: Ontarians also want to be heard with respect to the changes in the selection process for judges of the Supreme Court of Canada, which will give the provinces the right to select the candidates for those appointments.

Spending power: The Meech Lake accord states, "Canada must provide reasonable compensation to any province that does not participate in a future national shared-cost program in an area of exclusive provincial jurisdiction if that province undertakes its own initiative or programs compatible with national objectives."

Naturally, as the public in Quebec and as the public across this country have questions, we have several questions here. We would like specific definitions regarding this provision.

Would programs such as post-secondary education, health care, pensions, child care and language rights be part of this provision? Will Parliament be compelled to provide money for provincial plans that do not meet national standards—that is the way it is now—but which the courts decide are compatible with national objectives? That is the wording that is being looked at.

As well, we perceive some contradictions between Ontario and Quebec on this proposal. On the one hand, the Premier of Ontario has stated, "Ottawa's ability to set up new social programs will in some ways be strengthened." Premier Bourassa of Quebec has stated, "The country will be much more decentralized regarding these matters." Surely both are very contradictory statements by the two Premiers of the two largest provinces of this country.

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Quebec's Minister responsible for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs, Gil Rémillard, was quoted recently in the media as stating, "Quebec wants a clause written into the Constitution outlining its right to stay out of future national cost-shared programs and be compensated, even if it does not set up its own program in precisely the same field"—not even "meeting the national objectives in a field," but not even "in precisely the same field."

Consequently, these apparent differences imply future national policies may not be national at all in terms of uniformity. We feel public concerns in this area ought to be heard by this government.

On Senate reform, the accord transfers the nomination of senators to provincial governments pending Senate reform. This provision cannot be changed without the consent of all provinces.

Let me pose a question. Why would Ontario or Quebec, each presently with 24 senators, desire Senate reform? Specifically, we are concerned about the western goal of a triple-E Senate where all provinces would enjoy equal representation. Prince Edward Island, with fewer people than many of our ridings, would have equal representation as Ontario. In our view, this would go against the principle of representation by population, so key in our democratic system of government in the western world and surely here in Canada.

Therefore, we would like to hear the government's response to this proposal. We would like to hear how Ontario intends to make its case known and what policies, if any, the present

government has in regard to the idea of Senate reform.

I would like to conclude my remarks at this point and reserve some time. These are just some of the concerns that have been raised recently on the Meech Lake accord. I believe these concerns are legitimate. They are not solely held by this party but also by many individuals in Ontario and in Canada. Given the potential changes implied by the accord, we feel it is only fitting that the public be allowed some time to give its input to this historic agreement.

The Deputy Speaker: The member has reserved eight minutes and 30 seconds for his windup.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The member for Nipissing has moved an important resolution for the consideration of this House, and I rise to support the resolution. I want to do it in the context of my own involvement in the constitutional process here in the Ontario Legislature and from my experience recently in Nicaragua on the question of how one develops a constitution.

I sat on the select committee on constitutional reform that was established back in 1980. We had meetings at the Legislature and met with legislators around the country during that time. I was just reviewing some of the speeches that were made in the House in November 1980 in conclusion of that discussion as the first part of the patriation of our Constitution took place.

One thing that struck me in looking over those remarks at that time, my own included, was the absence of public input from the average person on the street into the whole question of the patriation. It was really a matter of the will of the Prime Minister at that time, Mr. Trudeau, and his desire to push ahead with this. It was under the control of 11 people essentially, the Premiers and the Prime Minister, in terms of how it should be undertaken.

Even at the legislative level here in Ontario, we got to play a bit part in the process and held our own travelling show, travelling around the country as I said, but there was no real participation by the people in the determination of whether that patriation should take place, what should be involved in it at that time and what should be part of the accord.

This speaks to a major problem that we have in politics in Canada; that is, a real separation of the people from the political process.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: Are you not the representative of the people?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The member for Kitchener is making a very interesting point,

because we do rely almost entirely in our process upon representatives for decision-making; and the representative notion of our democracy, which is so important to its orderly functioning, often gets in the way of the direct participation of the people in important processes.

All of us have a great fear of the notion of referenda in terms of their abuse, but in some ways it also is a fear that is brought about by our own desire to protect the representative control that we have as members for four years, usually, between elections.

Then at the provincial level, we put on a 37-day campaign in which the people are bombarded with messages in as simplified a fashion as possible and asked to choose which of us is going to hurt them the least. They make their decision on that basis and then they go back to relying again on representation as the means of dealing with political matters.

If we think about that in terms of the Constitution and allowing a very small group of people at the top of the representative pyramid—that is, the Premiers and the Prime Minister—to make decisions that will be fundamental to the evolution of our country, members can see there are some real problems with that.

For the member for Nipissing to be raising this issue at the moment is almost like trying to close the barn door after the horse has gone many miles away, because the people have never been involved in the constitutional process in our country. But surely some limited hearings here at the Legislature, to have an airing of views of the various issues that are involved in the Constitution, would be a breath of fresh air in terms of the notion of who has the right to speak about the Constitution.

In my speech in 1980, I talked about having entered the select committee process feeling that the Constitution was a very dry and musty kind of thing, something which only lawyers or other people could understand and therefore perhaps should not be, as a layperson representative here in the Legislature, even part of my responsibility or my capacity to deal with.

I soon learned that the Constitution is anything but, or should be seen as anything but, a dry document. It is the rock, the foundation and the concepts upon which our country is based. It is interesting that the only attachment to our Constitution as it exists at present that I can see out there is the Charter of Rights and the notion of the individual rights protections.

There has always been a major debate, of course, around section 133 of the old British

North America Act and the whole question of the preservation of language rights; whether Ontario should participate in making French an official language. That was a huge concentration of our considerations back in 1980. On the whole, people do not think about how that document sets the tone for how our country should operate.

I look at things that are happening now in this society in terms of the free trade decisions that are going to be made by a huge majority in Ottawa soon without any major public input in terms of that process. If we look at our Constitution, there is little in it about economic rights, whether they are individual rights or our notion of what our sovereignty is in economic terms. The failure to put that into our Constitution has left us very vulnerable now at a time when the free trade notion is being postulated around the country by a large majority at the federal Parliament level who can fundamentally affect our ability to be a sovereign nation. We are seeing that at present with the increased demands that are being made by the United States in that debate.

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I remember the Dennis Lee poem, *Civil Elegies*, talking about ourselves as being an outposted empire. I think there is a real point to that in economic terms and it looks as if we may even be able to incorporate ourselves more within the empire of the United States soon by virtue of those economic changes, with no protection in our present Constitution for it.

If we had thought more about that back in the 1980s and had not allowed this to be some esoteric move by the Prime Minister of the country to somehow repatriate an old document but rather a way to talk about what kind of country we want in Canada at the end of this century and moving into the next, we might have come up with a very different kind of document.

I agree with the member for Nipissing when he says the issues that are involved in Meech Lake are important and need to be debated, and not just by us.

The kind of balancing between the centrist notion of having all social programs done just through the federal government with all provinces complying, versus the notion that any province can opt out and receive assistance from the federal government to choose and operate its own programs, is a very interesting and important balance as you look at the evolution of social policy in the country. I do not think the kind of debate that is required took place before this Meech Lake accord went through. Do we want to

maintain the present drift that we are in or do we want some changes in that? Should the public not be involved in those decisions?

The immigration question in Quebec is another one which I think needs to be aired. I do not have the same concerns that I know rest with other people around that issue, but it is one that needs to be talked about. The whole question of the recognition of Quebec as a distinct community is another thing which needs to be talked about, not just among politicians but among the people in general, to gain a better understanding of the real nature and guts of what Canada is all about.

From my point of view, as an abolitionist, I think the notion of the Senate reform move that is being talked about here is incredibly dangerous. I am very nervous about any kind of notion of a move in that direction. I think people need to talk about it. It is not something that needs to be suppressed.

I stand as somebody who has, as Lee put it, a "bloody-minded reverence" for my country. I believe it is shared by the people of the country, and the debate about the most crucial element of our country, our Constitution, the foundation of the country, should be open to the people. If it can only be done in a gesture of limited hearing here in the Legislature, then so be it. Let us at least do that for the present time.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I expect this will not be the last time that I or other members of this House have an opportunity to address the historic Meech Lake accord. I certainly feel we are entering into a new era, but for most of our lives Canadians have wrestled with the ignominy of not having had our own patriated Constitution. The debate really has evolved through the lives of the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) and others. I think we have all been aware of it.

From my earliest childhood, I have recollections of this debate going on through the 1950s, including Bruce Hutchison's book, *The Unknown Country*, through the debate through the 1960s, through the Fulton-Favreau formula that was debated so thoroughly in the 1960s, through the meetings that John Robarts formulated and negotiated in the late 1960s, through the Victoria conference of 1971. Surely we learned something from the failure that actually occurred in the Victoria conference of 1971 when we thought we had a formula for success, when we thought we achieved success only to find that in the days and weeks that followed, one province—Quebec as it turned out, under Premier Bourassa—was unable

to deliver what he felt at Victoria he was able to promise.

Are we going to go through all this yet again, this time to have the Ontario Legislature doing the nitpicking which results in what fabric of agreement is there being dissipated?

After Victoria, the patriation of our Constitution had to wait a full decade in which the Prime Minister of this country, Pierre Trudeau, never ceased to work towards this accord. We had various proposals throughout the 1970s: Senate reform, for instance, in 1978; the federation of the provinces concept, which was debated; and then in 1981, finally, the matter was settled, not with a massive Athenian democracy of 25 million people getting together to decide exactly what they should say in their Constitution, not with public input from every street corner, not even really with debate in every one of the 11 provincial Houses and two federal legislative bodies, let alone hearings in committees.

We are the elected representatives—the member for Nipissing, the member for Scarborough West; we are each elected representatives of our people. We speak for our constituents. We are here to make decisions on their behalf.

In actual fact, when the Constitution was formulated in 1981, it really came down, as mythology tells us, to three people, as I understand it, Jean Chrétien, Roy McMurtry and Roy Romanow, in a kitchen, putting together the concept which finally resulted on April 17, 1982, in the signing of a Constitution with a Charter of Rights and Freedoms that protects the individual. It was representatives who negotiated that charter to protect individual rights.

That is not a perfect document. It is a document which is still being honed and fashioned by the courts, as it should be. I happen to have been the first lawyer in Waterloo region to challenge a law within the courts within a couple of days of that charter being signed. That is the purpose of the courts in interpreting a Constitution.

While a Constitution of necessity needs to be honed and fashioned by the courts, this Constitution had one major flaw. Quebec was not represented in the kitchen on that fateful night, and as a result, nearly one third of all Canadians are opted out of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and are not yet full members of the Constitution process. Quebec has been an orphan of Confederation.

I hope and expect that Meech Lake will rectify that, but as always, when lawyers try to put an understanding into writing, there is pulling and

pushing as to words, as to terminology, and we are right now at that very fragile point. Compromises on innuendo and wordings are taking place right now. In fact, meetings occurred as recently as yesterday. The first ministers will be agreeing on this final resolution within a few weeks at most, and then they can, and indeed must, put this resolution before the nation's legislatures, including this one.

The ship is still on course, but let us keep it on course. After the resolution is prepared—and as I say, this will occur within a few weeks at most—we will have ample opportunity to have a full debate. In fact, according to the Constitution Act, we have three years to have a full debate. The Premier has promised us we will have a full debate on that resolution. Even if there is some attempt by the government not to keep that promise, the rules of this House apply amply for a full debate.

I feel strongly that while a debate is warranted, it is warranted not before the final agreement is available for us but afterwards. It is presumptuous and indeed threatening to do otherwise, but it is fortunate that the member for Nipissing has so crafted his resolution as for it to be, in fact, a mere opinion. In view of the usual ganging-up and obstruction tactics that are occurring in the opposition on this resolution, it should be very clear on the record that this is, in fact, a mere opinion. As I understand it, this is a mere sentiment which does not in any way bind this House in the future. If the parties of Sir John A. Macdonald and Tommy Douglas want to play politics with the nation's leaders attempting to forge a historic agreement, the final building blocks of this nation from sea to sea, I say there should be a sense of shame for their so doing.

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The constitutional process has to go through and reach its proper conclusion within the next few weeks. Debate is warranted, but how can we debate a resolution which we do not yet have in front of us? When we do have it in front of us, let us take as much time as we need—three years, if necessary—to debate it to its proper conclusion.

Mr. Guindon: It is a great privilege to have the opportunity to speak in support of the motion of my friend and colleague the member for Nipissing. On May 1, the Prime Minister and the 10 Premiers came to the historic agreement to bring Quebec into the Constitution. I applaud the efforts of all those involved in reaching this agreement. I do not see the Meech Lake accord as a mere political victory for the negotiators; it is a victory for all Canadians. When the Premier of

Quebec signs the Constitution, Canada will once again be a whole country.

While the accord does signal that all parts of Canada can work in harmony to achieve a common goal, it is important to allow those most affected by such an agreement to have some input. That is why my party has been pushing for open, public debate on the formal agreement prior to a vote in this House. Setting aside one or two weeks of time so that interested members of the public will have the opportunity to express their views is a democratic way to proceed. Ontario, in itself, has many diverse areas. The people of each of these areas will, no doubt, have varying opinions on the content of the agreement.

When we look at the spending powers of the federal government and the opt-out clause, there seems to be a considerable amount of confusion and contradiction. The Premier and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) are of the opinion that this section of the Meech Lake accord will strengthen the federal government's position by allowing it to get more involved with provincial social programs.

Premier Bourassa has been quoted as saying this clause will help to decentralize the federal government. Obviously, there is a significant difference of opinion as to what this section means and says. Did the Premier know what he was agreeing to? This clause has proven to be one of the most fruitful in demonstrating the difference of opinion between Ontario and Quebec. If only to clarify this one issue, public hearings would be most beneficial.

Looking at Quebec as a distinct society for a few minutes, I have several questions of the government over this clause of the agreement. What will happen if Parliament or a provincial legislature fails, in the opinion of a linguistic minority, to live up to its commitment? Could the minority appeal to the courts? These too are questions to which the people of Ontario deserve answers.

I agree that Quebec is a distinctive area within Canada. Everyone should realize that his French culture does not end abruptly at the Ontario-Quebec border. All along the Quebec border there is a strong French population living in Ontario. These people have the same cultural background as their distant cousins in Quebec. However, they do not receive the same cultural benefits that the Quebec residents enjoy. The reverse is also true; the English people of Quebec have long been struggling to maintain their own cultural identity.

Rather than allowing the two cultures to live in relative harmony, the accord may actually perpetuate the centuries-old feud between the English and the French. This could push the two-nations theory into reality, thereby forcing Canada apart rather than bringing it together. These are important issues to most Ontarians. Why is the Premier so insistent on not allowing the public some input?

The Meech Lake agreement also allows provinces to submit lists of names to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court of Canada. The president of the Canadian Bar Association would like to know: What if the federal government does not agree with the province's list and the province refuses to submit a second list? Does the seat remain vacant?

In 1985, the bar association offered a report that suggested appointments be made by a panel removed from the political process. This would have been a viable alternative to what was agreed. Was it put forward for discussion or totally ignored? With the agreed scenario, a deadlock could occur should a provincial government not favoured by the federal side try to plant political judges.

The Premier also agreed to Senate reform that would likely result in all provinces having equal representation. While some reform is needed, I do not see why Ontario or Quebec would want to lose their strong representation in the Senate. Again, the people of Ontario should be consulted before any steps are taken towards Senate reform.

I would also like to touch briefly on immigration. The accord would seem to give Quebec the power to bring forward its own immigration policy. Will Quebec be allowed to select immigrants? Will the accord restrict the movement of immigrants trying to find work or be with families? These again are questions that must be answered and the people of Ontario have the right to put them to their legislators.

My party's leader has requested several times in this House that there be open, public hearings on this formal agreement. Each time, the Premier has said the debate that will be held is sufficient. I disagree. The people of this province deserve to be heard. In defence of having public hearings in Quebec, Quebec's Minister responsible for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs, Gil Rémillard, said: "The hearings were just to have the point of view of experts and the public. It is the democratic way to have these reactions."

Does the Premier not believe in democracy? The people of Ontario deserve the same right as

the people of any other province in Canada. Overall, I am extremely happy that we have been able to come to a mutually agreeable solution to bring Quebec into the Constitution, but I am concerned that the Meech Lake accord may diminish the powers of the federal government. I would be hard pressed to support any constitutional agreement that would turn the federal government into a cheque-signing and tax collection agency.

We owe the people of Ontario a chance to give their input on this very important matter. I disagree with the Premier's opinion that there would not be enough interested people to hold public hearings. If he truly believes this, I must inform him that he is sadly underestimating the people of this province. Ontarians deserve better. They have the right to be heard. I encourage the government to allow a committee of this House a week or two of time to hold public hearings on the federal agreement prior to a vote in this House.

Mr. Breaugh: I am pleased to join in the debate this morning. I am going to support the resolution before the House. I have a little reluctance and I want to put that on the record for a start. It is my view that a rather impractical notion has been put in this resolution, but the principle is one that I would adhere to. I do not want to have three years of hearings before a committee or to put the government of Ontario in a position where it cannot ratify anything until this long, unending hearing process is completed. To me, that is widely impractical and is not the way we should go.

However, I would argue that, as has been done in Quebec, it would be very appropriate for a committee of this assembly to hold out a vehicle to the public in Ontario. It would be appropriate to say to one of our committees, "For a two-week or three-week period, or whatever, you are commissioned to sit and receive opinions from the people of Ontario." I suspect there are a number of them who have thought a lot about constitutional matters, who will bring to us different perspectives from law and the professions, from labour and from special-interest groups and who want to get on the record their opinion of the Meech Lake accord. I think we could do that.

This resolution does not quite do that. Unfortunately, we cannot amend members' resolutions as they are brought before us, but I am supporting the principle, however woolly-eyed the resolution itself might be. It is important for us to note that there are practical problems in

carrying through with it all this way, but the principle of a committee of the assembly being available so that the public can record its opinion on this very important matter should be the overriding principle.

1140

Second, I have heard some rather distressing news from the government side this morning, a government member saying he did not want politics to enter this. I have a respect for the political process in this country which he obviously does not share. I believe in this political process. It is a process that has made this country what it is, warts and all. It is the best we have. The absence of it is some kind of tyranny. I have some concerns that a constitutional agreement of this calibre that does not get a lot of public scrutiny is one which is going to be in trouble.

I am told this morning that the government House leader, for example, is going to try to get a debate on the Meech Lake accord in the assembly next Tuesday afternoon, and that is before even the rough draft has been circulated to the members, let alone a polished and final form is available. So next Tuesday afternoon, we will be debating, I am told, something that most of us as members have never even seen. Somebody should put the brakes on this process. There is a time in the political process to call a halt to things and to have sober second thought, so to speak, to rationally analyse what is being proposed. It is not happening here.

I want to move very quickly into some of the substance of this Meech Lake accord, which other members have touched on, some of which, I am going to say out front, is a little strange to me. I do not understand why in western Canada there is a great move on to reform the Canadian Senate, but there is. Though I do not understand it, as a Canadian I am bound to at least listen to what they have to say. If I am so discourteous as to dismiss it out of hand, I run the risk of alienating many people in western Canada in exactly the same way as we have alienated people in Quebec for a long time. We do not have to agree with them; all we have to do is listen to them.

Although I am not really a great fan of the Canadian Senate and would probably say that under current circumstances the most kind and humane thing to do would simply be to do away with that chamber, there may well be those who have an argument contrary to that. My only obligation is to listen to their argument and to see whether we can accommodate one another.

I have some great concerns about the nature of the country if this accord is put into the Canadian Constitution. At the very least, we will have to say that the country called Canada will operate in a rather different manner if the Meech Lake accord is fully implemented. Because of the rather dramatic consequences that could happen from that accord, we need to analyse this thing rather carefully. That is the reason I am advocating some limited form of public hearings as being desirable.

Maybe I am wrong, but I thought I heard a government member say this morning that it does not matter what this assembly says here today, that it makes no difference to the government whether the majority of members in this assembly are in favour of public hearings or not; the government will do whatever it wants. That is not a great way to start a discussion on constitutional matters. That is precisely what got this nation into some considerable difficulty: one group of people in Canada saying, "We do not care what the rest of you say; we will do what we want."

This nation is a tenuous one. If you were trying to put together a country, it would not look much like Canada. It would not have all these blank spaces with no people. It probably would not be quite as big as this in geographic terms. This country has evolved under rather difficult circumstances. It has to face some unfortunate facts, and they are simply put.

In the Maritimes, for example, there is an economy which is totally different from what you see in southern Ontario, and there is not much connecting the two except the federal government. In the northern part of this province, there is an economy that is not much like the economy of the southern part of Ontario, and there is not much holding those two together except the provincial government. The west is totally different from the east. All of these different groups of people, all of these different types of geography, all of these different needs, make up Canada. To try to get it into a functional nation is not easy.

I have long been one who says that one of the biggest problems Canada has is that we are not proud enough of the things we do, of the accomplishments we achieve.

My daughter goes to the University of Texas, and I have been there on a couple of occasions now. I am really awed by what the Americans do about themselves, how proud they are. Some of us, as Canadians, will take exception to this; we do not like the way the Americans brag about their achievements. But I have to say it works. At

the end of the process, they are incredibly proud of their accomplishments, right or wrong. We do none of that in Canada. Perhaps we should do more. Perhaps we should exhibit more of a nationalist feeling. Perhaps we should try to accommodate these people in a different way. Perhaps the Meech Lake accord is the route to go.

I would say this: As members of the assembly, we will have an opportunity to debate some kind of motion approving the Meech Lake agreement, and that is fine. That is our role in the political system. I have a considerable respect for that.

There are also many others who deserve a chance to be heard and deserve to be heard in a formal way before a committee of this assembly. That is essentially, warts and all, what this resolution calls for. I support that. I believe this government would be incredibly well served if it were to slow things down just a bit and open up an occasion when people who want to speak to us about this constitutional agreement get an opportunity to do that in a formal, acknowledged way before a legislative committee. I do not think that would do anybody any harm.

I know there is a rush to create a Premier who is a nation-builder; there is an urge to create an image here. I am not saying that is a bad thing either; I am simply saying it should not preclude a hearing process for everybody else. That is all the motion asks for.

If the government begins this process of ratifying the Meech Lake accord by saying it does not matter what the assembly itself says—that the assembly this morning can support the idea of public hearings and the government will choose to ignore it—it will be starting off on the wrong foot.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: It is the way it is drafted. It is an opinion.

Mr. Breagh: In much the same way, the member for Kitchener is so busy interjecting right now that he has no time even to listen to an opposition member. All we are asking the government to do is shut up and listen to people for a change. It should not be that hard.

The Acting Speaker: Would the member please retract the words he used, "shut up"?

Mr. Breagh: It is not unparliamentary, but if it offends, I will retract it. Everybody is very sensitive.

The pertinent point is that the government does not have all the knowledge in the world. It would do well to listen to the people of Ontario who want to appear before a legislative committee. It would serve our purposes as members to have the opportunity, in a formal way, to let these people

appear before a legislative committee. Then we would be well equipped to debate the Meech Lake accord.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: But they are not prepared to talk to you. They talked to me.

Mr. Breagh: If the Speaker is going to say to me that I cannot tell the member to shut up, he has an obligation to see the member does not interject. It is as simple as that.

The Acting Speaker: Would the member again please retract those words?

Mr. Breagh: I will retract the words "shut up" if the Speaker will make sure they do not interject while I am speaking. Is it a deal? I am happy to retract it.

The Acting Speaker: Your time has expired.

Ms. Caplan: In the few minutes remaining, I would like to participate. I know the opposition benches will be most attentive while I speak, so we can conduct this debate in perhaps a more normal tone than we have found in the last few minutes. I find it rather distressing, especially when there are students in the gallery and people watching us on television, that we get into that kind of bickering. I hope during question period we will not have that kind of interjection from the opposition as well—

Mr. Wildman: We are all in favour of open government.

Ms. Caplan: Open government.

As we enter this kind of constitutional debate and constitutional amendment process, it is very important that we remember what that process is and how it was established some five years ago—and that is one of consultation and ongoing debate throughout this country—as we reach that kind of accord and decision. The timing of the debate, the actual structure, is left to the individual provinces to determine how and when they want to respond. There is a three-year time period in order to formalize, under the amending formula, an agreement to an accord.

1150

I think we are at a point in time right now which is very delicate. A few years back, not only would we have reacted favourably, but also I can remember many of us venturing into Quebec during the time of its referendum. I think it is significant to remember what we would have offered at that time to have had the kind of accord and the proposals we have today, and how much we in this country wanted to make sure that Canada was unified coast to coast and that all our provinces were partners in our Constitution.

The proposals that have come forward from Meech Lake will require the kind of discussion and scrutiny, coast to coast, that will be appropriate. I think the democratic process allows for members to speak in this House, in their communities and during election time—and who knows when we might have that opportunity in the not-too-distant future—so that on something as important as the Constitution, we, as the democratic representatives, use this opportunity and this forum in this House to speak on what I think is the most important issue of our decade.

Mr. Wildman: After public hearings.

Ms. Caplan: How you involve the public across this country is part of what is discussed in this House. I think it is premature at this time, until we see what the accord is, until we have the written document, to make that—

Mr. Laughren: It is too late.

Ms. Caplan: No. I do not believe it is too late. I believe it is the responsibility of the government to bring that back into this House, to have that kind of debate and to use the three years for full public participation.

Mr. Harris: I want to thank the member for Scarborough West, the member for Cornwall (Mr. Guindon) and the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breagh) for supporting this resolution.

I note the concerns of the member for Oshawa that the resolution is full of warts, as he says, or warted, as it is. One of the difficulties in presenting this resolution is that I do not know what are the time constraints. I do not know whether we have three years or three days for public hearings. I have left it as flexible as I can to say that I think those hearings should take place. Surely, if the intent of this resolution carries, we can then work out when they should take place and at what stage of the process.

Mr. Wildman: They are having hearings in Quebec City, are they not?

Mr. Harris: Yes, starting next week.

I want to say also that I thought the member for Scarborough West hit upon a fairly important point. He indicated that while we are the legislators and will ultimately make a decision and have an opportunity to speak and to vote, we are lay members in most of the fields we end up voting on, and he asked, "Does it make sense that we do not want to hear from the public, from the experts, from the people who can give us their advice, before we have to make up our minds?"

In chatting with the member before this resolution, he pointed out to me—and members know his interest in Nicaragua and the time he

spent down there—that there a country striven with civil war took the time to take a draft constitution to every village in that country, even as many of them were under siege, and got input from the public. They got input from the people on every street corner and adjusted their constitution accordingly. But for some reason or other, the chief spokesman for the Liberal Party does not feel that is appropriate here in Ontario.

I was particularly disappointed in the remarks from the member for Kitchener and those from the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan), because she seemed to be supporting this. But I guess the chief government spokesman was the member for Kitchener, who made several very ludicrous statements. One of them was: “The failure of the Victoria charter was the result of public input.” That is why it failed: Somebody consulted the public and it failed. What a silly statement to make. It failed because Quebec changed its mind.

To imply that to hear from the public is going to cause this accord to fail does not show a lot of faith in this accord that the Premier is so proud of, that he went down there and supported. If it fails because of public input, it should fail. If it cannot stand up to the scrutiny of what Ontarians want, then it does not deserve to go forward.

The spokesman from the Liberal Party said something—I do not have the exact quote, but I will paraphrase it. He fears public input from people on every street corner. We cannot have people from every street corner speak to this. Is that not what we are elected for: to listen to people on the street corners, to listen to people throughout all parts of this province? Is that not why we are elected? That is why I was elected and it is the way I operate in everything. The indication was that we cannot hear from people on every street corner. I think we are here to listen to our constituents.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I did not use the word “fear” and I am not being correctly quoted.

The Acting Speaker: This is not a point of order.

Mr. Harris: He said we cannot have it. I interpret that to mean that he is afraid of it. If he is not afraid of it, let him vote for the resolution and he will be able to correct the record right here in this House. If he does not fear it, let him go ahead with it.

I want to get something else on the record. I am a little concerned with the timing of this process. Three weeks ago, we heard that the final wording would be out to us in a couple of days; then it was

to be in a week, then in two weeks, and then in three weeks. This morning the government House leader said, “My Premier wants this debated next Tuesday.” We still do not have the wording.

The question from the leader of the New Democratic Party was, “Mr. House Leader, will we have the resolution?” “I do not know.” “Will a debate proceed without the final wording?” “Yes. That is what my Premier wants.” Earlier, the member for Kitchener said, “We cannot have hearings without the final wording.” Now we hear the Premier wants this debated without even the final wording.

I am concerned about the time frames. I also heard that the Premiers were going to get back together around the middle of June. Today I heard they are trying to bump it up to June 2. Maybe we will get the final wording by June 1, and then the Premiers will all get together to ratify it on June 2. After that, we will have three years to debate what has already been settled.

To me, that is backwards. I think that is a prescription for failure; I do. Once that wording comes back, they will ask the federal House and the legislatures of the 10 provinces to say yes or no. They will not ask to change one word, because if one word is changed, it will be no. That is what we will be told. They will come back to us and say: “This is it. Yes or no?”

My prescription would suggest that maybe there should be just a little bit more time than one or two days to talk about what it is. Our Premier should go back there to work out wording that has some consensus and some agreement beforehand. Then the debate will not take three years. If it stands up to public scrutiny, if it is everything that the government says it is, if that interpretation is there—and surely we will know that once we get it and we get some public input—it will not take three years of debate to say yes or no. This whole process is backwards.

I cannot, for the life of me, understand—I guess the member for Kitchener talked about politics. It was alluded to by my friend the member for Oshawa. Can members give me any rational reason why a government would not want to hear from the public?

Mr. Gillies: Yes, because they are afraid.

Mr. Harris: But they are not afraid. I heard him say that he is not afraid, so he is going to vote in favour of it now, I guess. We will see whether he is afraid. We will see very shortly.

The only reason I can think of is the one alluded to by the member for Oshawa; this is a political agenda. We want to go to the people of

Ontario with some illusion that our Premier is Joe Canada on the national scene. Then if it fails one, two or three years from now, who will remember? We will have an election and nobody will remember that. This is the backwards process. I have left the resolution vague enough to provide this government with any opportunity.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: It is vague enough that it is not possible.

Mr. Harris: Anything is possible. One day of hearings is possible under this resolution. I suggest it might be more like two or three weeks as the member for Oshawa has suggested, but nothing is impossible under this resolution, and I urge all members not to fear public input but to vote for it.

1200

ONTARIO HYDRO RATES IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

The Acting Speaker: Mr. Gordon has moved resolution 11.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Mr. Harris: Was that unanimous?

The Acting Speaker: It was carried.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I asked whether it was unanimous. We heard some nays and we have not been asked to vote on it.

The Acting Speaker: This is a voice vote. It has been carried.

Mr. Harris: With respect, Mr. Speaker, can I then have your determination that contrary to the yelling out that it was unanimous—you said it was unanimous. If one person is not in agreement, surely you ask for the ayes and the nays. That is a voice vote. You said, "Shall it carry?" I heard some people say "nay."

The Acting Speaker: I did not hear any nays.

Mr. McClellan: Mr. Speaker, it was very clear that a number of members on the government side voted "nay" with their voices. In that case, you are required under the standing orders to proceed to the next stage of the vote.

The Acting Speaker: I did not hear any nays.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, can I suggest that you put the question again?

The Acting Speaker: I did not hear the nays, but for the pleasure of the House, for the pleasure of everyone, I will ask the same question again.

Mr. Gordon has moved resolution 11.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

1208

The House divided on Mr. Gordon's motion, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes

Allen, Barlow, Bernier, Bossy, Breaugh, Bryden, Callahan, Caplan, Charlton, Cooke, D. R., Cooke, D. S., Cordiano, Dean, Eves, Foulds, Gillies, Gordon, Grande, Gregory, Guindon, Harris, Hart, Henderson, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Knight, Laughren, Mackenzie, Mancini, McClellan, McFadden, McGuigan, McLean, Miller, G. I., Morin-Strom, Newman, Offer, Pierce, Pollock, Ramsay, Reville, Rey-craft, Rowe, Sargent, Shymko, Sterling, Treleaven, Turner, Villeneuve, Warner, Wildman.

Ayes 51; nays 0.

1218

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

The House divided on Mr. Harris's motion, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes

Allen, Barlow, Bernier, Breaugh, Bryden, Callahan, Cooke, D. S., Dean, Eves, Foulds, Gigantes, Gillies, Gordon, Grande, Gregory, Guindon, Harris, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Laughren, Mackenzie, McClellan, McFadden, Morin-Strom, Pierce, Pollock, Reville, Rowe, Shymko, Sterling, Stevenson, K. R., Treleaven, Turner, Villeneuve, Warner, Wildman.

Nays

Callahan, Caplan, Cooke, D. R., Henderson, Knight, McGuigan, Newman, Offer, Ramsay, Rey-craft, Sargent, Smith, E. J.

Ayes 36; nays 12.

The House recessed at 12:21 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Shymko: I rise to condemn this government for its shabby and insulting treatment, by yesterday's Liberal budget, of 40 per cent of Ontario's population, representing the nonofficial-language ethnic minorities.

The allocation of \$4 million of extra funding for multiculturalism out of almost \$35 billion of Liberal government spending has fueled the indignation not only of my honourable colleagues from the opposition but of all Ontarians. This funding represents 0.01 per cent of the total budget. This is shameful for a government that pretends to be sensitive to ethnic minorities and multiculturalism. It adds insult to injury by a Liberal government that has planned to eliminate the Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism and Citizenship, wanted to slash its budget by \$100,000 and to this day has not announced its multiculturalism policy, due to be announced in February of this year.

When it comes to putting its money where its mouth is, in the eyes of this Liberal government ethnic minorities are worth 0.01 per cent. This is shameful and unacceptable. This is the bottom line when it comes to the sanctimonious platitudes we constantly hear about sensitivity to ethnics and to minorities. It is a shame, and we as Ontarians and as the opposition condemn this government for this treatment.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Foulds: The Liberal government raised incredibly high expectations, especially in northern Ontario. Last November, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) said in Sault Ste. Marie that the provincial government had a responsibility to provide infrastructure to stabilize the economic base and to provide a social structure fair to the people of the north.

Yesterday's budget was a grave disappointment.

No action was taken on the ripoff that is northern Ontario gasoline prices. No action was taken to protect the northern Ontario energy consumer.

The extra \$26 million for northern highways sounds good, but it will build a mere 13 to 26

miles of new two-lane highway. Some northern development.

With the necessity to twin the Trans-Canada Highway, at least between Nipigon and Shabqua, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury and Highway 400, this is totally inadequate. The money is less than half the extra amount northerners pay for gas.

Finally, the northern Ontario heritage fund is a cruel hoax. Thirty million dollars sounds like a lot, but stack it up against \$30 million the province is giving to one construction project in Metro Toronto, the SkyDome, the \$35 million and \$15 million in grants and low-interest loans to Toyota in Cambridge and the \$58 million for two hospitals in Guelph and we can see the inadequacy. This is not northern Ontario development; this is not a northern Ontario heritage fund; this is patronizing: Tory patronage economics in a red tie.

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

Mr. McGuigan: I rise to thank the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) for a move that has been long awaited in southwestern Ontario—it was long awaited through the years of the opposition's era of power—and that is the rebate system that was announced for wetlands.

Under the old program of rebating 60 per cent of the taxes to farm land and none of the taxes for wetlands, even though wetlands were taxed at a lower rate, the net figure was that wetlands paid a greater per acreage tax than did farm lands. The people of southwestern Ontario, particularly around Lake St. Clair, Rondeau Bay and Lake Erie have been lobbying and working for this, as I did when I was in opposition. I am very pleased now that the minister has acknowledged that and is taking steps to bring relief to a very important problem.

As members know, wetlands are important to recreation and to regulating flooding situations. The wetlands are a breeding ground for all sorts of wildlife and fauna and for filtering out and purifying our waters, so we receive this in very great spirit.

TAX INCREASES

Mr. Brandt: Since June 1986, several taxes have been increased by the Treasurer of Ontario (Mr. Nixon). He has increased personal income tax by four per cent and imposed an additional surtax. He has increased the alcohol beverage

markup levy. He has increased fees for drivers' licences and motor vehicle registration. He has increased the corporate tax rate. He has increased the land transfer tax. He has increased the amount of gasoline tax paid by Ontario citizens. He has increased the number of products affected by the retail sales tax. He has increased the tobacco tax. He took an additional \$900 million from Ontario taxpayers last year alone.

The headlines from yesterday's budget should be that the Treasurer cut taxes, not that we did not suffer any more increases. Our party says: "Give it back to the people of this province who have created the prosperity and wealth the Treasurer is enjoying. Let the people decide how they want some of their money spent."

There is no doubt in my mind they can do a better job than the current government. Get the money back into the hands of the people so that they can plan for the economic bust the present policies of the current government will create.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Mackenzie: Four years ago, the Consolidated Bathurst plant was shut down in the city of Hamilton and 180 workers lost their jobs. The treatment of the workers was so bad that even a previous Tory minister, Gordon Walker, was compelled to say in this House that Consolidated Bathurst was not the best corporate citizen.

These workers went to the Ontario Labour Relations Board on the basis of the company bargaining in bad faith, on the basis that they had negotiated a contract and only six months later the company closed the plant, knowing it was going to be closing it when it negotiated the previous contract. These workers went to the labour relations board and won a \$310,000 judgement, based on bargaining in bad faith.

It is a tragedy that this was appealed to the Supreme Court of Ontario by the company. The court upheld the workers on a three-to-nothing decision.

Yesterday the workers found out that now the company has been given leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. Four years later, those workers have not seen a cent of that \$310,000. They are not getting any of it. There have been workers deceased and suicides in that plant since that time, and there is a perception in Ontario by those older workers who were involved in a plant shutdown that justice simply does not exist in this province today.

It is long past time that this government took a look at what happens to older workers in these kinds of situations and at why they should wait

four years with still no decision on money they have won.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Interjections.

Mr. Callahan: I have been in this House for only two years and a little bit, but over that period of time it is obvious I have gained popularity with the opposition.

I want to address something that really bothers me, which is the fact that we all know northern Ontario has a problem. It is not a problem that arose during the two years we have been in office. It arose during the 47 or 46 or 42 years the Tories were in power. They did nothing about it whatsoever. Their contribution was to build or buy Minaki Lodge. That was all they did.

1340

I would think it would be an important enough issue among all members of this House that we would deal with it on a nonpartisan basis and try to come up with solutions. The Premier (Mr. Peterson) has begged the opposition parties to give him ideas. Thus far, we have seen none. The people of northern Ontario know this government is taking steps to try to deal with the problem, probably for the first time in the history of this Legislature.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Stevenson: Yesterday's budget did not address the income side for farmers. Farmers who have cash can get \$2,500 for badly needed repairs. For most, it means borrowing even more money to take advantage of a government program. There was no financial support for crop insurance, as recommended.

Maybe the biggest problem with yesterday's budget is the problem of the property tax rebate. The 100 per cent rebate on farm land and buildings was a concept conceived when farm land was selling for thousands of dollars per acre. Today, farms sell for a few thousand dollars more than a house in an adjacent town. It is very clear that if the assessors are not given clear direction, farmers are going to be getting 100 per cent of nothing back and paying through the nose for the value of high-priced homes.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

EDUCATION FUNDING

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: It is good to be back. I am pleased to announce today that this government is making another major investment in the future of the next generation, one that will help

guarantee in bricks and mortar the principle of universal accessibility to our post-secondary institutions.

As the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) reported to the House yesterday in his budget, we are spending \$100 million in 1987-88 towards the construction of new facilities and renovation of existing buildings at universities and community colleges. This cash flow in 1987-88 will support and enable some \$200 million in total for new buildings and renovations at the institutions across Ontario.

As the record will show, this year's allocation represents more than double the capital spending on post-secondary institutions from just two years ago when this government took office. While that is a singular accomplishment and a measure of the substance of our ongoing commitment, it should also be acknowledged that much of what we are doing is made possible by a buoyant Ontario economy. It carries forward the promise of the throne speech to use the current fiscal dividend to invest in Ontario's future.

Je me réjouis du fait que nous soyons maintenant en mesure de poursuivre ce que nous avons commencé l'an dernier, c'est-à-dire, répondre sérieusement aux besoins de revitalisation physique des collèges et universités. La gravité de ces besoins a été abondamment documentée par des conseillers externes, le ministère et les établissements eux-mêmes. Cette situation a d'ailleurs été rapportée à plusieurs reprises par les médias de la province.

It is very important to understand that the very significant capital requirements that our colleges and universities now are confronting are the result of several factors. These reflect the age of the buildings as well as the past restraints on government funding. The most significant need for capital enhancement comes from both enrolments, which have continued to grow through the 1980s, and the requirement to renew our post-secondary facilities to meet modern high standards in teaching and research.

We will be providing a total of \$66 million for capital projects in the universities in the 1987-88 fiscal year and a total of \$34 million for community colleges. This will include a \$20-million renovation fund for universities that will be distributed on a formula basis. There is in addition a \$10-million renovation allocation for community colleges, also distributed on a formula basis. These tied funds, which must be allotted to renovation-type projects, will thus enable the institutions to determine their own

priorities for renovation expenditures in accordance with their defined needs and planning priorities.

In accordance with this announcement, I will be travelling to a number of universities and community colleges across the province to provide them with the details of major new projects that we now are enabled to support at these institutions. I invite members of the opposition to go on those journeys with me. Indeed, this morning I had the pleasure of making a very important announcement at Ryerson about a new project we will be funding there.

As is already well known in the post-secondary community, these capital initiatives are consistent with and complement the very significant progress we have made in expanding operating support in the current fiscal year. Together, these measures will help guarantee accessibility to high-quality post-secondary institutions in an era when education has become the most critical component in our long-term economic viability.

PRESERVING ONTARIO'S ARCHITECTURE

Hon. Ms. Munro: I am very pleased to report to the House today a new program that will protect and preserve the province's rich architectural legacy. As the members know, the five-year-old building rehabilitation and improvement campaign, BRIC, recently drew to a close. Our new program, Preserving Ontario's Architecture, has been designed to build on the success of BRIC. This \$2.2 million initiative will provide both a financial component, making grants and loans available for architectural conservation and restoration, and a component of education and technical support for communities involved in architectural conservation.

By providing financial support and giving practical know-how to people within the community, the quality of architectural conservation projects will be raised. This will be achieved through seminars, technical literature and support and advisory services.

Financial support consists of four grant and loan components. Three of these components—designated property grants, revolving heritage funds and conservation district funds—will be administered by municipalities. The fourth component, commercial rehabilitation grants, will be available directly from my ministry.

Preserving Ontario's Architecture reinforces the commitment of this government to our

heritage resources. Let me stress the importance of the educational component of this program. It will enable those interested and directly involved in heritage conservation activity to gain more knowledge and technical information. It will increase community awareness and expertise, creating a new appreciation of heritage buildings and architecture.

The Preserving Ontario's Architecture program will help to ensure that our heritage resources are cultivated and enhanced.

PREPAID SERVICES

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Later today, I will be introducing the Prepaid Services Act. The purpose of this proposed legislation is to provide increased protection for Ontario consumers entering into prepaid service contracts with clubs associated with health, fitness, modelling, diet, talent, martial arts, sports and dance activities.

The large number of failures of such clubs and their current practice of demanding full, upfront payment of membership and initiation fees has meant considerable financial loss to many consumers. The Prepaid Services Act will reduce the losses a consumer faces when a club fails by imposing restrictions on the terms and length of his contract with the club.

The restrictions contained in the Prepaid Services Act will include a five-day cooling-off period during which time all membership fees must remain in a trust account; the length of the contract must be limited to one year; instalment plans must be made available for payment of all moneys collected and a month-to-month payment option must be offered; sequential or concurrent contracts are prohibited; renewals will be permitted only with prior notification of members, reminding them of their right to refuse renewal; pre-selling memberships is permitted but all moneys received must be placed in a trust fund until five days after the club actually opens for active membership; initiation fees cannot be greater than twice the annual membership fee; and clubs should continue to honour their existing multi-year and lifetime contracts.

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I am sure all members of this House are aware of situations where people have paid considerable sums of money for multi-year membership in a club only to find that a short time later the facility is closed and the membership is terminated.

In many of these instances, high-pressure sales tactics have contributed to consumers purchasing

long-term, expensive contracts that they do not use and cannot cancel.

The Prepaid Services Act will ensure that all consumers have reasonable payment options available, substantially limit the amount of money they might lose and allow them the opportunity to cancel the contract within five days of signing if they wish.

I encourage all members to support this new consumer protection legislation.

RESPONSES

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: I wish to speak to the statement made by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) today in following up, as he attempted to do, on the failure of his government to capitalize on what was clearly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change directions in this province.

The government announced yesterday in the budget, and it was confirmed today in the statement of the minister, \$100 million towards the construction of new facilities for colleges and universities. I should like to address just what kind of commitment this government has to these facilities. First is the framework. The government has had \$8 billion in new dollars to play with since it came into office. Yesterday, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) introduced a budget spending \$35 billion. What was the minister able to get from him? He was able to get \$100 million towards colleges and universities.

How does that break out? It breaks out in this way. For the colleges across this province he is going to provide \$34 million. There are 22 community colleges across this province, and with \$8 billion available after two years this minister was able to get for the 22 community colleges—count it—\$1.5 million of capital for each of them.

He was able to get \$66 million for 15 universities or \$4 million for each university; unless, of course, the University of Toronto, Western and McMaster get a large chunk of that money. In that case, all the other universities can look to another dribble of \$1 million coming off the lap of the formerly parsimonious Treasurer sitting on \$35 billion. There is \$8 billion in additional revenue and what does he have for the colleges and universities? He has about \$1 million or \$2 million an institution.

I ask the minister, where did the money go? I want to tell the minister where the money did not go. It did not go to his Futures program because in the first budget, the Futures program was

announced at 230,000 positions and yesterday the Treasurer stood up and said that 50,000 people, not 230,000 young people, were helped by the Futures program. It was not spent in the Futures program. Where was it spent? It was not spent on the commitment we have heard about for a northern high school of science. It sure has not been spent on the tourism hospitality school the people in eastern Ontario are waiting for.

The people in eastern Ontario are not waiting for a dribble of \$5 million out of \$35 billion, and an office, let us not forget, in Pembroke and self-help centres. They are waiting for the tourism hospitality school. The government does not have money for that, but it has money for hamburgers and it has money for 5,000 new civil servants, 5,000 more bureaucrats; \$200 million for bureaucrats, \$1 million for colleges and \$1.5 million for universities.

Let us not hear about this alleged commitment that was heralded in the speech from the throne. When it comes time to produce, this minister produces not 230,000 Futures jobs but 50,000. This minister has produced maybe \$50 million more than the previous government. When the Treasurer had \$8 billion more than the previous government, he gave the minister \$50 million.

I have one other comment. When the minister stands up and boasts about the capital, we want him to give us an assurance that the Treasurer's in-year constraint of \$75 million off the capital announcements is not going to come from colleges and universities. Can he give us that commitment today? Or is the Treasurer going to whip him into submission again and say: "Sorry, Greg; now that we have made the announcement we do not really have to do it. It is like the Futures program."

Yesterday the Treasurer announced \$2.7 billion worth of capital and then said, "By the way, folks, \$75 million I do not mean." Where is it? Is the minister prepared this afternoon to say that he has an absolute guarantee from the Treasurer that \$75 million will not come off the budget he announced today? Because if any portion of it does, the minister's bold statement today falls as flat as the Futures program, where he produced about one fifth, 20 per cent, of what he promised.

When out of \$8 billion additional dollars this minister can produce \$1 million or \$1.5 million for institutions, which his Premier (Mr. Peterson) likes to whine about across the province as being underfunded and inadequate for modern-day facilities, this minister joins this Treasurer and this Premier in saying, "Yes, a world-class

flop; a disgraceful effort yesterday." The government missed an opportunity to change direction.

Mr. Allen: Methinks the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) doth protest a little too much. I recall 15 years ago when the capital funding of Ontario universities was ended in the early 1970s. That ended all renovations money and for 15 years we heard nothing from the Progressive Conservative Party as far as capital expenditures were concerned.

I can understand why the minister would be setting out his itinerary already. He should do that with a little bit of guarded style, because if he is going to be travelling about the universities and doling out \$1.5 million for colleges and \$4 million for universities, that may not impress either some colleges or some universities. On the other hand, he will have to select his sites in such a way as not to give the impression that he is giving too much to some and not enough to others. I can see his staff is going to have some trouble establishing this itinerary and working it out to his satisfaction.

May I say that what is missing from this announcement, essentially, is not that there is \$100 million there—obviously that is going to do some good—but that the province really has no way of knowing exactly what this accomplishes in real terms. The minister still has failed to provide capital funding on a formula basis, as recommended by the Bovey commission, whereby the money regularly goes in allocated proportions with regard to square footage of university space. Businesses do that. Why cannot this ministry keep up its funding on that basis? There is no reason that minister should not be announcing a formula for capital development and capital renovation. He has not done that, so none of us can sit down and say exactly how useful this amount is.

As to whether it will help guarantee accessibility and high quality one may ask another question, because after two years in government we still are not above the average per-student funding of this system. Second, there is going to be a seven per cent increase in the registrations from the new Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions students next year, and the amounts that are allocated to operating funds are going to have to be stretched even further. In all likelihood, universities are going to be more hard-pressed than ever in their operations.

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PREPAID SERVICES

Mr. Swart: I would like to say to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr.

Kwinter) that I am happy to see him introduce this bill to provide some protection for prepaid services. I will be much happier when it is passed in this pre-election period. We do not know whether they really mean it or whether it is posturing. In fact, the Conservatives never even postured to do anything like this in all the years they were in power, so I have to give the minister a little credit.

I have two reservations. I am concerned about permitting the initiation fees to be at least twice as high as the annual membership fees; and it will have to be adequately policed. One thing that government has shown, whether on health and safety or whatever, is that it has not been strong on policing; but I will give the government points for bringing it in at this time.

PRESERVING ONTARIO'S ARCHITECTURE

Mr. Rae: I want to say to the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) that it requires quite an extraordinary amount of arrogance or something bizarre on her part to be making an announcement with respect to a new program when her ministry's budget has in fact been cut by \$21 million when one combines capital and operating expenditures. It is a remarkable statement on her part not to have even mentioned that, not to have even stood in her place and said, "This is what has happened."

I want to say to the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko) that the significance of the cut is even greater in dollar terms than he indicated in his earlier statement. The one ministry that has been chopped dramatically by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is the minister's own. For her to announce a new program strikes me as a little bizarre. One can only ask, where it is coming from?

ORAL QUESTIONS

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED.

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Premier. I wonder whether the Premier can explain to this House why he allowed his Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in yesterday's budget to take from the disabled people of this province \$2 of the \$3 sent to them by the federal government? The federal government sent \$3 to the disabled in this province. The Treasurer stole \$2 and the disabled got \$1. How does the Premier explain that?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not like the use of the verb "stole." It is inappropriate in here. I felt I should register my views in that connection before answering the question, which is otherwise a reasonable one.

The honourable member will know that the Canada pension plan pass-through for the disabled would have affected, if it had passed through, 13,000 of our disabled. Instead of using that approximately \$12 million to enrich the 13,000 disabled, we are taking \$54 million to increase the payments to all the disabled, amounting to 87,000 people, by approximately \$50 a month. The honourable member, being alert to what happens in this House, will realize that last January 1 we gave an additional increase of \$22. So within these few months, the disabled—not just a small group of 13,000 but all the disabled, 87,000—are receiving an additional \$72 a month. The member is talking about stealing \$12 million, if the member wants to use the words; we are changing that into \$54 million and distributing it across the needs of all the disabled.

Mr. Grossman: If the Treasurer expects me or the disabled to say that when \$150 a month has been sent by the federal minister, telling him the money is meant for the disabled and not for him, he has not stolen that money, he should not wait for the retraction. It is not coming from me and it is not coming from the disabled.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Do you have a supplementary?

Mr. Grossman: My supplementary question is, will the Treasurer not agree that the federal government sent \$150 a month to the disabled under the Canada pension plan? Will he not agree that 13,000 of them will end up with only \$50, not \$150; and will he not agree that the guaranteed annual income system cheques for those 13,000 are reduced by \$100 in that process? Will he not agree that is exactly what happened?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not agree with that and I also do not agree with the contention put forward by the honourable member that we should have two classes of disabled citizens. It is the responsibility of the government of this province to treat these unfortunate people with fairness and equity, and in taking the money from the federal jurisdiction we have changed that money into a \$54-million program that is distributed with fairness and equity for the benefit of all.

Mr. Grossman: For this Treasurer to say he did not have enough money to pass it through, with respect, will not ring proper.

Let me ask the Treasurer this question. He alleges this afternoon and in the budget yesterday that he is spending \$54 million on this program. His Treasury staff disagreed with that yesterday. They admitted that half of the money—it is a shared-cost program—comes from the federal government and that for the 13,000 he does reduce their cheques, the government's liability, by \$100 a month each. Therefore, by our discussions with the Treasurer's officials this morning, the actual cost comes down not to the \$54 million he gave them, but to \$15.3 million because of the shared cost and his stealing of \$2 out of every \$3 from the 13,000.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat. The honourable member accused the Treasurer of stealing. Will you withdraw that word?

Mr. Grossman: I withdraw that word.

My question to the Treasurer is this. Will the Treasurer not agree that since he took \$2 of the \$3 sent to 13,000 disabled by the federal government, the actual net cost of the provincial contribution is not the \$54 million reported in his budget, but the \$15 million reported by his staff to us in the lockup yesterday and confirmed this morning in conversations?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If the honourable Leader of the Opposition is under the impression that the members of this House do not understand how the Canada assistance plan works, he is very naïve. The money that goes into the budget is paid out to the disabled and the increase is as I have predicted and projected, and the number the honourable member is using should be \$54 million for that purpose. The fact that the government of Canada reimburses the consolidated revenue fund on a basis of 50-50, as with all other programs, is well known and is the way we have budgeted not just in the two years that we have had the responsibility, but in the 42 years that the honourable member or his party was associated with it. As a matter of fact, that shared cost was an initiative brought in by the government of Canada, very appropriately.

Mr. Speaker: I might suggest to all members that it would be most helpful if one could speak at one time.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: My second question is also to the Premier. I hope he will address some of the budget questions. The Premier has made a number of speeches about the importance of elementary and secondary school education. What we find out in the budget document is in

fact that total transfers to local school boards will decrease this year. I wonder how he can explain the fact that local transfers to school boards will decline in the fiscal year reported yesterday in the budget offered by the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer it to the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the Leader of the Opposition and the members of the House would like to know that just for operating expenses alone, the Ministry of Education has had available to its treasury and for passing on to all the school boards an amount that is approximately 25.37 per cent larger than the budget we took over when we assumed office less than two years ago.

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The honourable member will also be aware that in the statements having to do with capital support for this particular year we are making available double the amount available in the last budget of the Conservative Party and for the pre-commitment for next year it is actually triple the amount.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer recites a 25 per cent increase in spending; the tax load and revenues are up 31 per cent. Funding for education, to the school boards, is net down from where he took it over, and this year as a percentage of the provincial budget it is down.

Hidden away on page 64 of the budget, table C6, we discover that in 1986-87 the total conditional transfers to the school boards will be \$3,787,000,000. The budget plan for the current year, 1987-88, is down to \$3,579,000,000, a reduction of over \$200 million in the transfers to the school boards.

After all the emphasis the public and the Premier have placed on education, how can the Treasurer possibly find an excuse to reduce the transfers to the school boards this year by \$200 million, the same amount the government is using to pay the extra bureaucrats it has hired since it came to office?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am amazed that the Leader of the Opposition, a former Treasurer himself, would not have the ability to examine the budget carefully and listen to the statements that have been made by myself and the minister. If he had done that, he would know that before the beginning of the provincial fiscal year and early in the fiscal year of the school boards we transferred an additional \$330 million up front to enable them to pay their bills. That \$330 million

is the kind of initiative we have needed in that regard.

Mr. Grossman: That is exactly what it says on the chart we have, but what the Treasurer is indicating, therefore, is that he does not intend to free-flow the amounts this fiscal year that he free-flowed last year. He cannot have it both ways. Either he counts that figure last year or he does not.

Is the Treasurer going to tolerate a \$200-million net decrease in the cash flows this year or is he going to cash-flow \$330 million again—in which case the deficit goes up and all of the rhetoric goes down the drain and he has to find from his colleagues \$700 million, not \$350 million, to give any truth to his deficit projections? Is it down \$200 million or is he going to free-flow?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am glad that in the histrionic outpourings of the Leader of the Opposition, if one listens to him carefully, there is a recognition that the \$330 million, payable before the beginning of our fiscal year, is in the fiscal year of the school boards and that their payments are maintained.

Mr. Grossman: Are you going to do it this year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: What we are going to do next year is a budgetary position of great importance and we are not letting the school boards down.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition has already asked two questions plus supplementaries. Please allow others to ask questions.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, in view of a statement he made about six months ago in Sault Ste. Marie. I would like to remind him of what he said. He said, "We have a responsibility in providing the infrastructure, providing mechanisms to stabilize the economic base, providing a social structure that is fair to people in northern Ontario and assisting the private sector in wealth and in job creation."

In view of the fact that yesterday's budget makes a mockery of that statement, can the minister explain something to us today? How can he justify the \$30 million that has been allocated to the northern Ontario heritage fund, which after all is to look after those very infrastructures and social problems we have in northern Ontario,

compared to \$30 million of public money for one project in Metropolitan Toronto—namely, the SkyDome—or for the \$35 million he has promised Toyota for an assembly plant, plus another \$15 million for training grants, as I understand it? How in the name of heaven does the minister justify that kind of double standard?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I must say I find my honourable friend's question a little bit bizarre. I guess he would ask me to draw comparisons between various parts of the province. He may want to exacerbate tensions between parts of the province by saying, "This part got this; the other part got this." I think my honourable friend would want to look very carefully at the total package of initiatives in northern Ontario.

When he looks at the addition to transportation, when he looks at the northern Ontario heritage fund, when he looks at the northern development fund, I am sure my honourable friend will be the first to acknowledge there has been substantial activity in northern Ontario when he looks at the broad range of programs.

I guess my honourable friend has now said he is against the dome. Even though various other members opposite are in favour of it, he does not think we should have done that. He thinks we should have spent it somewhere else. There is not a penny spent anywhere by this government that someone could not say he would rather have had it somewhere else. By any objective standard one wants to use—and I am not suggesting for a moment that my honourable friend is objective on these matters—I believe objective observers, looking at the initiatives in northern Ontario, see a sensitivity from this government heretofore unseen in this province.

Mr. Laughren: I must say I am disappointed in both the tone and the quality of the minister's response. I wonder whether the minister can set aside the imputing of motives for the moment and give me a response on the whole question of the allocation of money to northern highways as well.

He is the minister who is responsible for the allocation of those dollars once they are assigned to northern highways. I wonder whether the minister could tell us, given the fact that \$26 million has been set aside as new money for highways in northern Ontario—and while he may not like the comparison, it is being made all across northern Ontario today—comparing the \$26 million for highways all across northern Ontario and \$130 million for Metro highways alone, does he think that is fair?

Finally, given the fact that the municipal engineers of northern Ontario tell us that it costs up to \$2 million a mile to build new highways in northern Ontario, could he please tell us where those 13 miles of new highway are going to go in northern Ontario?

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Hon. Mr. Peterson: I know the honourable member would like to make some of the comparisons that, frankly, disappoint me in the tone and tenor of his questions in that regard, which show a kind of provincialism. However, let me respond to my honourable friend.

That brings the total transportation budget for northern Ontario to \$106 million. That was in addition to what was previously there. I say to my honourable friend that I do not detect the same degree of pessimism in northern Ontario that he does. People I have talked to in the last 24 hours are saying it is a wonderful new initiative. They are very happy to see the commitment in northern Ontario. I am sorry my honourable friend is alone in his criticism.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We will just wait.

Mr. Wildman: Will the Premier admit that this budget and what has been allocated to the north is an indication that this government has given up any commitment it may have had at any time to deal with the serious economic problems we face in northern Ontario, in that in terms of new money it works out to approximately 15 cents per northerner this year? How on earth is that amount of money going to do anything about the serious economic problems, the downturn, the unemployment we are facing in communities such as Sault Ste. Marie? Is the minister not aware that the layoff at Algoma Steel alone in Sault Ste. Marie is going to take \$45 million per annum out of that one economy and he is giving a total of \$30 million in his northern Ontario fund? It is a pittance.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked several times.

Mr. Wildman: Why is he giving up on the north?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not see it quite that way. The member will notice that the budget for the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines is up some 16 per cent. That speaks at least in some measure to the influence the minister has with the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in that particular regard.

If the member looks at what has happened in transportation, with the northern development

funds, with the heritage fund and with a variety of other initiatives, I do not agree with my honourable friend that his great pessimism is shared. When one adds on the initiatives we have taken with respect to moving jobs there, this is a budget of which I am extremely proud and which I am extremely proud to defend. I say further to my honourable friend that if he and his colleagues are really as exercised as they think, bring in a vote of confidence and we will go to the people on it.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind members that we are still in question period. Anything else can come later.

Mr. Rae: Before I address a quick question to the Treasurer, let me say that if the Premier is having trouble making up his mind, he should not look to this place to make up his mind. He should go on and make up his own mind. He should decide what to do. That is where the dithering is and the cuteness is; let the dithering and the cuteness stop. He wants to stop it; he can stop it. It is up to him.

Mr. Speaker: Now the question.

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: Go ahead. He should make up his mind and let us know what it is, and we are ready—whatever he decides. He should decide. I know the difficulty he has in making up his mind. He should make up his mind. We are ready.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: I seem to have aroused some kind of reaction on the other side.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Rae: Until the master of indecision does make up his mind, I want to ask a question of the Treasurer, because we are dealing with the budget which he has put forward.

I want to come back to this question of education. I want to come back to page 64 and the question of just how much money the Treasurer is transferring and just what is being done, because I think we are seeing, as we do on many budgetary occasions—and I have had some experience with these at both levels—the hand can sometimes be quicker than the eye. I just want to make sure and get clear in my mind what the Treasurer is saying.

Is he saying the \$330 million which is listed under general legislative grant flow improvement is a one-shot deal and will not be done again? If he is saying it is a one-shot deal and will

not be done again, is he in fact not agreeing with the fundamental proposition that however you cut it, he is in fact in real dollar terms transferring less to local school boards next year than he was this last year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am sure the honourable member is aware that over the years school boards have had substantial difficulties in early fiscal year financing for the school boards, which begins January 1. Because of this, the former cushion of payment, which had begun some years ago at about seven per cent, had been reduced as a budgetary measure by our predecessors to something like two to three per cent. We have twice strengthened that cushion, first to seven per cent and then to 12 per cent.

This particular amount of money gives them the flexibility—

Mr. Davis: Are you going to do it again?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Of course, we are going to maintain that position of flexibility so that the school boards will be able to pay their bills without going to the bank, without borrowing to the extreme position that was necessary in the past. We feel it is appreciated by them and a step in the right direction.

Mr. Rae: I want to ask the Treasurer a very simple question.

Mr. Rowe: Speak slowly.

Mr. Rae: I will try to speak slowly. I thank the member for Simcoe Centre. It is a defect I have had since a child, trying to speak too quickly. I will try to speak more slowly.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Slow down.

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: I am doing my best. I will try to do it in pictures for the member later on.

I say to the Treasurer, if he is going to do it again, as he said in response to some very friendly assistance from the other side, if he said, "Of course, I am going to do it again," and I heard him say that, I do not see that in these numbers, unless I have misread the final green figures—not in red, in green—in budget plan 1987-88, unless I have misread them.

If in fact he is going to be spending more, why does he not tell us now? When is he going to announce it: during the next election campaign or at some other point? Can the Treasurer tell us why those figures are not in the budget if that is what he is going to do?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think members are aware of the fact that the commitments to the funding of education have been growing over the years.

There is no way that the financing of education is going to be withdrawn. As far as we are concerned, the schools are going to be adequately and properly supported. We have a wide variety of programs that are going to be aimed at funding education. We are not going back on that.

Mr. Speaker: Final supplementary?

Mr. Rae: I do have a final supplementary. First of all, I want to congratulate the Treasurer on a nice try. I did not hear any sort of an answer to that particular question.

One would simply like, perhaps by way of final supplementary, to ask the Treasurer, if in fact it is true that his commitment to education is the greatest, why has he cut the funds for the one ministry that is involved with literacy? He has transferred literacy from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. They have been cut by \$21 million.

The percentage of the provincial budget spent on education is down to 19.3 per cent, which is less than the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) was spending when she was the minister—quite an achievement—and the share of provincial spending is down from 48 to 46 per cent. If the Treasurer is so hot, why do none of the figures show it?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Since the honourable member has asked about the literacy program, he can be sure is not being cut. It is being properly and adequately financed, and there is no doubt about that.

I think the honourable member should also be aware that the percentage changes year over year for Citizenship and Culture are based on substantial additional payments that were made available, or money available to the ministry for funding of a variety of programs that were available and requested during the last six weeks of the fiscal year. The expenditure was substantially ahead of what the budgetary amount was last May.

1430

PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Premier about the fastest-growing industry in Ontario, which is the size of his own bloated government. I would like to ask the Premier why it is that when he took office some two short years ago, there were just over 80,000 civil service people in the employ of this government, and there are now over 84,500, an increase in two years of about 4,645 people. We want to know why this administration has completely undone any ef-

forts by the previous administration to contain the size of the civil service and why he is allowing the fastest-growing industry in Ontario to be the size of his own wretched government.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the best way to answer the honourable member's question is to read from the budget—something he might have done for himself—on page 51, as follows, and I quote:

"The average number of provincial public servants increased by 1,945 during 1986-87, primarily as a result of the implementation of the Young Offenders Act and a number of other programs, including enhancement of occupational health and safety, skills development and psychiatric services programs. Included in the increase is the impact of the conversion of 700 part-time employees to the classified staff"—I might add, in parentheses, something the former government was always unwilling to do—"as a result of the adoption of a new policy on the appointment of regular part-time employees."

That is the answer.

Mr. Gillies: The Treasurer has completely failed to address the question. After a decade of efforts to contain the size of government in this province, the government has opened the gate; it has 4,600 more civil servants at an estimated cost of some \$200 million. When high schools are bulging at the seams and communities are going begging for health care services, we want to know how the government can allow its size to become bloated and to suck up that kind of money.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The histrionic excitement seems to be contagious.

Mr. Speaker: Do you wish to make any response?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I simply point out to the honourable member who has asked the question that it is difficult to determine where he and his party stand when we talk about these increased numbers of public servants required for the purposes I described. Does he feel we should not live up to our commitments under the federal Young Offenders Act? Does he believe—and this is something he was up on yesterday in question period—we should not have inspectors under the Occupational Health and Safety Act? Does he believe we should not have a properly staffed skills development program or perhaps we should reduce psychiatric services? The honour-

able member's position is totally illogical and irresponsible.

PROVINCIAL INCOME TAX

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer on the rather staggering increase in personal income taxes that have come into the provincial Treasury in the last two years, an increase of \$2.7 billion. I remind the Treasurer he said in his budget yesterday that the current tax system is failing the test of fairness and that he was bringing forward measures to ease the tax burden of low-income Ontarians.

Can the Treasurer explain to us how he thinks it is so fair, when only \$10 million out of all those new revenues from income taxes are going to ease the problem of the low-income earners? In particular, yesterday morning in the lockup, when we asked the Treasury officials about a family of four with an income of \$15,500—which is, by the way, about \$7,000 below the poverty line—they admitted to us that family would still be paying about \$450 in provincial income taxes. Does the Treasurer think that is a fair test of fairness?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the honourable member will know that the Ontario tax reduction program is a subject I have addressed in all three of the budgets for which I have had responsibility. We have increased that tax reduction program for the third time, and this will relieve approximately 100,000 tax filers of the necessity of paying income tax at the provincial level.

These people pay up to approximately \$270 individually, or as a family, in income taxes at the federal level, where the tax reduction program was phased out by the new government. This is a difference in philosophy; and frankly, I am surprised that the honourable member would not be rather enthusiastic, at least about the philosophy of tax reduction at the low-income level.

I would agree with everyone here that we would like to have made that a larger reduction, but this is simply the judgement on the allocation of these funds that we were able to make under these circumstances.

Mr. Laughren: I appreciate the civility of the Treasurer's reply, if not his policies.

In his statement yesterday, the Treasurer indicated there was \$85 million in new money in the form of tax credits. The Treasurer will remember that when this government came to power, the value of those tax credits was \$292 million. In absolute dollars, he is now \$12 million below the level of when he came to

government. If the inflation factor is built in, he is about \$40 million behind the value of tax credits when he took power. Would the Treasurer table the test that he used to determine fairness?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is a matter of judgement. Once again we wish we could have made that richer, but in fact the allocation of those funds does not keep step with inflation. That is correct. It has remained unchanged for many years. The honourable member, among others, suggested rather strongly in previous speeches last year that we should take action on this. Using our judgement and with the support of the honourable member and others, we have made that correction, at least to the extent that we thought was possible. It is substantial; I believe it is 27 per cent, and it is not to be sneezed at. I am not expecting gratitude. I am not expecting support. Those are the facts. We think they are fair and equitable and what we can fund at this time.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Ms. Caplan: My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. In yesterday's budget announcement, there was a statement that Highway 407 construction would begin. There was no mention of funding for the Sheppard subway line, which is phase one of Network 2011. Can the minister assure the residents of North York and Metropolitan Toronto that the announcement of Highway 407 does not preclude the Sheppard subway construction?

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: Because of the unruly conduct of members opposite, I heard only part of the question.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: They are at it again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Did you catch enough of it to answer part of it?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I can assure my colleague the member for Oriole that the consideration of the Sheppard line and other projects in the Network 2011 proposal will be under review, as I indicated in my release a week ago Wednesday, my statement here in the House.

The committee we have formed to review will be in place. We have demonstrated before that this is not just another committee that will go on into Never Never Land. We get results from those reviews. The provincial perspective has to

be addressed in terms of the expansion of transit in and around Metro and the regions.

Interjections.

1440

Mr. Speaker: Order. I feel like asking a question. Supplementary; the member for Oriole.

Ms. Caplan: The people of North York and Metropolitan Toronto are pleased to hear that one does not preclude the other. We would like to know, however, whether the process that is now in place will allow for a role for the municipalities, the Toronto Transit Commission, to participate with the ministry to ensure this receives adequate and rapid consideration.

Mr. Grossman: They switched their pieces of paper, and you gave her the wrong piece of paper.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: With respect, the juvenile outburst of the Leader of the Opposition precludes me hearing the question.

Mr. Grossman: That's a Carnac act. She gave the answer to the question.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I suppose we could waste another five minutes of the members' time, if they wish.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Did the minister hear it or not?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: No. The Leader of the Opposition continues to treat question period like Tiny Talent Time. I was not able to hear the question.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Eves: I have a question to the Premier about the commitment of his government to northern Ontario through the northern Ontario heritage fund. I want to put this commitment in perspective.

The government last year had a surplus of over \$1 billion. He has not delivered on 1985 campaign promises of northern tax credits. He has done nothing about gasoline prices in northern Ontario. He has deprived northern Ontarians of their softwood lumber rebate to the tune of \$30 million. He has not delivered on some \$35.9 million promised through the northern development fund, small business development corporations and the community economic

transformation agreement. He is extracting from northerners in excess of \$150 million a year in gasoline taxes, which he is keeping high in northern Ontario—

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Eves: He is taking all this money out of northern Ontario, and his government's answer, his commitment, is to put \$30 million back in.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the question from my honourable friend from close to northern Ontario. It is very similar to the questions that were asked by the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) and the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman), and I am very happy to give my honourable friend, in case he did not hear, the very same answer.

As members know, I think he is looking at this thing in a rather limited way. I think one has to look at the wide variety of programs that exist with respect to northern Ontario, and I am surprised my honourable friend would be so negative about it.

I think we have moved substantially to address the problems, and certainly as the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, as one who travels widely in the north and hopes he is close to the concerns of the people there, I would say the reaction has been extremely positive. I guess my old friend's question was just based on nerves.

Interjections.

Mr. Pierce: I am up. I am waiting. He knows I am here.

Mr. Speaker: We will wait until everybody is finished.

Mr. Pierce: My question is also to the Premier, who is spending \$8 billion more this year than he spent since 1985. I ask the Premier, based on the \$8 billion more that he is prepared to spend this year, does he not think that northerners are worth at least one eighth of that amount of money? He should be prepared to put \$1 billion into the heritage fund to show the people of northern Ontario he is committed to them and to show them he is prepared to give them more than crumbs. He should do something today.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate my honourable friend's suggestion with respect to the quantum of the northern heritage fund. With the grasp of economics he has, he could stage another coup and become the Treasury critic.

I have the very highest regard for the people in northern Ontario. The member will see that we have responded in a variety of different ways. The budget of the ministry is up 16 per cent. In

addition, there is the transportation budget and the northern heritage fund. I think my friend will have a different view when he goes back home and talks to his constituents this weekend.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. On page 14 of the budget introduced yesterday, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) mentioned an allocation of \$26 million for child care initiatives this year. On page 15, it says the government is committed to \$33 million in capital funding over the next three years for child care. Can the minister confirm for us that the \$26 million for 1987-88 initiatives already includes \$11 million of that \$33 million in capital funding over a three-year period?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The answer is no.

Ms. Gigantes: Would we be closer if we asked the minister whether it included \$9 million on the remaining fiscal year allocations for capital funding? If the minister takes the remaining moneys out of the \$26 million announced by the Treasurer, that leaves him with \$17 million for direct grants that would help lower fees, for the subsidizing of new subsidized spaces or the subsidizing of existing spaces and for capital investments. If he applied all that \$17 million to attempt to lower fees, he would be able to lower fees for nonprofit spaces for families at a rate of about \$1.88 a day.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The \$26 million is new money. The \$33 million is new money for capital only. The budget statement clearly says this is money the province is going to allocate ahead of any federal-provincial agreement. Once that federal-provincial agreement is satisfied, we will make an announcement as to what further expansion of the system is going to be made.

DEFICIT

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Treasurer. Yesterday in his budget, he projected a spending deficit of \$980 million in the next fiscal year. In that same budget, he intends to spend \$1.33 billion more than the revenues he expects to receive. How does he anticipate reducing his deficit by \$350 million?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am glad to receive a question from the gentleman who I believe was the Treasury critic for 36 hours. His question is an important one because as far as we are concerned, the cash requirement this year will be below \$1 billion, about \$980 million. As far as that is concerned, it also reflects a balance or close to a balance in our operating fund, which I

think will be in deficit by about \$28 million. The funding is clear there. There is about a \$1-billion difference between our revenue and our expenditure, just a bit less than that.

Mr. Andrewes: I say to the Treasurer that is not an accurate reflection of what his budget paper gives us. It is not good enough. Why does he not come clean? Which of the highways is he not going to build? Which of the hospitals is he not going to build? Which of the university buildings is he not going to build? He should stop pulling the wool over our eyes and tell us how he is going to achieve that deficit reduction.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The commitments made in the budget have the dollars allocated and we intend to fulfil those commitments.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

1450

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Reville: I have a question about housing supply for the Minister of Housing. Since the government took power, the waiting list for housing in this province has increased by 12,000 families. One such family is a woman with a two-year-old son. She is currently paying so much of her income for rent that she has \$34.34 a week left for everything else. Will the minister indicate to the House when this mother and her son can expect to be housed?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member knows that when we took office the situation of supplies of affordable housing was really dismal. In the aggressive program that the government has taken on in supplying affordable housing, I am happy to report that I have committed and approved over 25,000 affordable housing units. As to the individual the honourable member mentioned, I would say there is much more hope there now than there was in 1985.

Mr. Reville: I would offer for the minister's perusal page 55 of the budget which indicates that since his government took power, the proceeds of speculation have increased so that the land transfer tax is now realizing some \$245 million more than it was in 1985. Will the minister put that money into housing for working people and their families in this province and double his allocations today?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am always hesitant when members of the New Democratic Party throw figures at me. Either they are speculating or—so I will again emphasize that the program we have put in place and the program that will come

forward will address many of the affordability problems that we have at the moment.

RETAIL SALES TAX

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the Treasurer. I have received equal criticism and admiration for the increase from \$2 to \$4 on the price of prepared foods on which there will be elimination of the retail sales tax. In the light of the fact that I have received equal criticism and admiration, I would like to inquire of the Treasurer just what amount of money that increase from \$2 to \$4 constitutes in terms of lost revenue to the government.

Mr. Bernier: It is in the budget.

Mr. Rae: It is in the book.

Mr. Martel: You can't expect a lawyer to read that.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: It is out of order.

Mr. Speaker: I will thank the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) for his assistance; however, I will not take it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I just want to disagree with one of the positions put in the useful question that was put before us. I have received no criticism of that action whatsoever, but naturally I would be guided by the views of the honourable member. We expect the additional \$2 exemption to cost in the area of approximately \$50 million.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Health. Can he explain to the residents of the city of Barrie how his government could increase its civil service by some 5,000 people yet not provide funding for a new hospital in Barrie?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman, I think, was here, although I know he was not awake, when the explanation was given with respect to where all the additional people had been added for the provision of new, very useful and very much needed services for the people of the province. Those people work for all the people of the province. Expenditures made to promote skills development and to deal with better service in psychiatric hospitals—in all those areas—work for all the people right across the entire province.

The member understands quite well that the lack of planning that preceded the announcements on five separate occasions by Tories, during or just before elections, did not provide us with the basis on which we could proceed in an

expeditious manner to announce any development in the Barrie hospital realm.

What we are doing is examining this particular project very carefully. The planning is progressing and we are doing what has to be done before announcements are made. I can tell the honourable gentleman that he, as much as any other person in this province, will understand how little planning he did before he announced it just prior to May 1985.

I will not make an announcement without adequate and substantial planning being done, for whatever project it is and for whatever area of the province it may be located in. We will do what has to be done to plan for an orderly redevelopment of the capital facilities in the health care field of this province before any announcements are made.

Mr. Rowe: I say to the Minister of Health that when we announced the hospital, it was ready to go and by now we would have started.

Interjections.

Mr. Rowe: Yes, we would have.

Mr. Speaker: Could the member control himself when asking a supplementary?

Mr. Rowe: It is rather difficult with this minister.

I say to the minister that planning can go no further. Planning can go no further until he approves a start date. How many people have to die in a hall with their families looking on while he sits on this thing without a decision? Why does he not have the decency? He has the money. When is he going to make the announcement?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Over the past several decades throughout Ontario there have been several projects, in terms of planning, in various areas of this province that progressed not one iota under the member's previous administration.

There was an unwillingness to take a very planned and a very progressive look at what had to be done to ensure that the capital facilities were in place to provide good quality health care. On several visits to communities around the province, I have indicated that I understand their desire to move expeditiously with their plans and with their projections for providing better care. I sympathized with those people who were practically starved to death by that government that ate up and consumed the capital structure of a very necessary and a very much required service in this province.

Mr. Gillies: Just announce it. Get on with it.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Mr. Speaker, before you ask me to answer the rest of the question—

Mr. Harris: You haven't answered any of it yet. Why don't you sit down?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not want to sit down yet. I know that you will want me to answer the rest of the question, Mr. Speaker, which basically asks me to say when I will make an announcement. I said in my opening reply to the member's question that announcements are not made by this minister until the planning has progressed to a stage where something can be done.

We are not moved in a manner like that gentleman was just prior to May 2, 1985—

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Order.

Hon. Mr. Elston: We will make the announcements when the planning is done.

Mr. Rowe: There is no planning. Political planning is all you are doing now; straight political planning. You are sitting on it.

Hon. Mr. Elston: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Scarborough West.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Treasurer.

Mr. Gillies: Just announce it.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Your party announced it and had no money. You made the announcement without any planning or thought.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The Minister of Health has had his question.

1500

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Tomorrow Rick Hansen arrives at his final destination after his world tour. He left this province with only a township being named after him. I want to ask the Treasurer why there was no centrepiece to his budget yesterday. When he had the largest amount of money to distribute that any Treasurer could imagine, why did he not take that occasion to give equal status and full citizenship to our disabled people in Ontario?

As the Treasurer knows, he only narrowed the gap between them and the elderly by the end of this year by \$20. They are still not eligible for property tax grants under his budget. Eighty per cent of them are unemployed and there was no announcement of a job program for them. Disabled adults still living with their families do not get a full pension. That is deducted from them

and their families are expected to pay. Why did the Treasurer not take this occasion to do something meaningful instead of just spending \$1 a day on the disabled?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In response to the honourable member, I feel that the budget did have a centrepiece, that in fact it was an orderly and equitable accounting of the business of Ontario, that it was a projection of our attempts to make up for chronic underfunding during the last decade. We did this without raising any taxes, we did this with a reduction of the deficit and, I submit, we did it with fairness and equity, given the money available to us, for all citizens, including the disabled.

Mr. Speaker: Brief supplementary.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Is the Treasurer saying that accountancy has triumphed over justice in the province?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am attempting to convey to the honourable member, whose views I appreciate and respect in this regard, that since January 1 we have raised the money available for the disabled by \$72 per individual. I wish it had been more, but that is a significant amount.

VISITORS

Mr. Brandt: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: I would like the members of the Legislature to recognize the attendance in our gallery of the mayor of Sarnia and the members of the Sarnia city council.

Mr. Speaker: As I have said on similar occasions, we are always happy to have any visitor here in the Legislature. However, there is an appropriate time for such matters, and that is during members' statements.

PETITIONS

PROVINCIAL TAXES

Ms. Fish: I have a petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned members of the University of Toronto community, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the provincial sales tax be reduced to six per cent, and

"(2) That the provincial share of personal income tax be reduced."

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Rowe: I have a petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is the responsibility of the provincial government to provide all citizens of the province with adequate health care facilities:

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to enact the recommendations of the Simcoe District Health Council in April 1986 calling for the construction of a new hospital in the city of Barrie, Ontario."

It is signed by some 3,500 residents of Simcoe Centre and is the first of many to come.

DRUG PRICING

Ms. Hart: I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor signed by 277 residents of York East.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the federal government is considering legislation to change and extend the patent life of prescription drugs, which action surely will increase the cost of medication in Ontario, we appeal through our elected government of Ontario to press for changes in the proposed legislation to keep the price of drugs down."

HOMEMAKERS WEEK

Ms. Hart: I have a petition for the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from the Ontario Association of Visiting Homemaker Services in respect of declaring the week of October 18 to 24, 1987, as Homemakers Week in recognition of the services provided to the community by homemakers in Ontario.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. O'Connor from the select committee on retail store hours presented the second report and moved adoption of its recommendations.

Mr. O'Connor: I am pleased to present today the report of the select committee on retail store hours which, pursuant to the order of the House on January 27, 1987, reports on Sunday shopping and retail store hours.

The primary recommendation of the committee, unanimously supported by all members, is to support the principle of a common pause day. The committee held public hearings over 13 days across Ontario and considered over 500 written and oral submissions.

The committee unanimously rejects the notion of wide-open Sunday shopping in Ontario as being inappropriate to the enhancement of family

life and recreational pursuits. None the less, the committee accepts and recognizes that in our modern society there is a widespread approval of some degree of retail activity on Sundays and holidays for convenience, essential services, cultural, recreational and educational activities and tourism.

While desiring to act in support of a common pause day and using the framework of the current Retail Business Holidays Act as a guide, the committee makes 17 specific recommendations, the major themes of which are:

1. Provide a greater planning and administrative involvement for the province.
2. Allow small bookstores, record and video stores, photographic studios and retail art galleries the right to open on Sundays and holidays.
3. Firmly restrict openings under the legislation for small stores, that is, those of 2,400 square feet or less, to self-contained small stores under one roof and make the practice of roping off by larger stores on Sundays illegal.
4. Firmly restrict and control the variety of nonpharmaceutical goods large drug marts can sell on Sundays and holidays.
5. Make proposals for the more systematic planning and designation of exempt retail tourist areas.

The committee firmly believes its recommendations will serve as a valuable guide to the updating of the Retail Business Holidays Act.

On motion by Mr. O'Connor, the debate was adjourned.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Mr. McCaffrey and Mrs. Marland exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Mr. Bernier and Mr. Guindon exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business and that the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item 10.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTING

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the standing committee on the Ombudsman be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Tuesday, May 26, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PREPAID SERVICES ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 65, An Act to regulate Prepaid Services.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Today I am pleased to introduce the Prepaid Services Act. This proposed legislation will provide increased protection for Ontario consumers entering into prepaid services contracts with clubs associated with health, fitness, modelling, diet, talent, martial arts, sports and dance activities.

The financial losses a consumer might suffer will be minimized by imposing restrictions on the terms and length of contracts. I encourage all members to support this legislation.

1510

PUBLIC HOSPITALS AMENDMENT ACT

Ms. Fish moved first reading of Bill 66, An Act to amend the Public Hospitals Act.

Motion agreed to.

Ms. Fish: This bill brings into parallel form amendments to the Mental Hospitals Act that make it clear that any patient may designate a patient's representative to act on that patient's behalf. In effect, it would extend the notion of power of attorney to patients in hospital that would overtake the normal provisions of next of kin.

FARM MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT ACT

Mr. Wildman moved first reading of Bill 67, An Act respecting the Sale of Farm Machinery and Equipment in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Wildman: The purpose of the bill is to regulate the sale of farm machinery and equipment in Ontario. The bill establishes the Ontario Farm Machinery Board to carry out several tasks respecting the sale of farm machinery and equipment. The board is given the authority to investigate complaints and mediate disputes arising from the sale of farm machinery and equipment and may establish inventory guidelines for vendors and dealers of farm machinery and equipment. The board may also make recommendations to the minister concerning the safety requirements and parts standardization for farm machinery and equipment.

The principal features of the bill are the following. Dealers are required to provide certain emergency repair parts upon 72 hours'

notice. Where a dealer fails to make repair parts available within the times required by the bill, the dealer is liable to pay the purchaser an amount equal to one half the normal rental rate for farm machinery and equipment. The bill sets out warranties applicable to the sale of farm machinery and equipment.

This is an updated version of the bill I first introduced into the Legislature in 1979.

MENTAL HEALTH STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Elston moved first reading of Bill 68, An Act to postpone the Commencement Date of Certain Provisions of the Mental Health Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Elston: This bill is needed to extend the time of the commencement of the operation of some provisions of Bill 7 that deal with the Mental Health Act. We had originally extended it to June 1, believing we would have had adequate committee time to consider amendments being proposed under Bill 190. We have now been scheduled for two weeks of hearings, which take us past the June 1 date.

I can tell the honourable members that giving us a little more time will allow us not only to adequately address the issues raised in Bill 90 but also to deal with the questions concerning competency and other issues of which members of the New Democratic Party and the Tory caucus are quite well aware, despite the outbreak from my honourable critic from the third party.

GAME AND FISH AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Bernier moved first reading of Bill 69, An Act to amend the Game and Fish Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Bernier: This is a reintroduction of a bill I introduced on February 12, 1987. I would like to read the explanatory notes to that bill.

The purpose of the bill is twofold. First, it will enshrine in legislation the establishment of a publicly appointed fish advisory council. The council will have the power to advise the ministry in its fish management program and would oversee the development and administration of an enhanced fish management program. This follows the statement made by the minister, and I believe by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), that most of the funds raised through the sale of a new resident fishing licence would be used for such a program. This amendment will guarantee to the anglers of Ontario that these new funds, expected to total about \$10 million, will indeed be spent on fish management.

Second, it will provide for a system of permanent identification numbers for resident hunters by requiring residents to obtain a resident hunter number card before being issued a licence under the Game and Fish Act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wonder whether I might ask you to consider whether or not the bill just introduced is in order since it definitely allocates public funds.

Mr. Bernier: It sets up a fish advisory council which would assist the ministry.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not mind the council; as a matter of fact I would like to be on it.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS ACT

Ms. Fish moved first reading of Bill 70, An Act to provide for the Appointment of Persons Authorized to Make Funeral Arrangements.

Motion agreed to.

Ms. Fish: This bill is a companion piece to the Public Hospitals Amendment Act, which I introduced a few minutes ago, and it similarly would make it possible for a person to designate someone else to take charge of his body, once deceased, and to make funeral arrangements. It is particularly appropriate for terminally ill patients where the patients and their lovers may have been alienated from the patient's family and it permits predesignation prior to death.

RECORD OF DEBATES

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I would like to get a ruling. I am on page 417, May 13, Hansard. With regard to the remarks made by the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko) in Polish, you said: "Because there have been many requests by the member who has just spoken that such words be printed in Hansard, I think it only fair that I inform the House they will not be printed in Hansard."

When the member has spoken in the several languages he speaks, he has always provided a copy in English for Hansard and I guess that has always been printed in Hansard until this time. It was his understanding that your ruling was that it would not be printed in Polish but that it would be printed in English. I wonder whether you would clarify that.

Mr. Speaker: I must say that on previous occasions we have had discussions. It certainly will not be printed in the language spoken other than English or French, as our standing orders say that any member has the right to speak in those two languages. I had best review the decision I made, not that day but previously, on

whether it would be printed in English. It seems to me on a previous occasion I said not, but I would like to review that. I will report back.

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: In the fullness of time.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, before we call the budget debate, could I have the agreement of the House to proceed with two routine motions, notice of which appear in Orders and Notices, which could be disposed of in a moment?

Mr. Speaker: Which items?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Items 7 and 8. They are just establishing committees, unless there is some debate on them.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement?

Agreed to.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 7:

That the following schedule for committee meetings be established for this session:

The standing committee on administration of justice may meet on Monday and Tuesday afternoons; the standing committee on finance and economic affairs may meet on Thursday mornings; the standing committee on general government may meet on Thursday mornings and, if required, on Thursday afternoons; the standing committee on government agencies may meet on Wednesday mornings;

The standing committee on the Legislative Assembly may meet on Wednesday afternoons; the standing committee on the Ombudsman may meet on Wednesday mornings; the standing committee on public accounts may meet on Thursday mornings; the standing committee on regulations and private bills may meet on Wednesday mornings; the standing committee on resources development may meet on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons; and the standing committee on social development may meet on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Motion agreed to.

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 8:

That standing order 94 with respect to the convening of committee meetings for organization be suspended for this session.

Motion agreed to.

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Grossman: I rise today, not to follow the unfortunate example set by the windup speaker for the government in the throne speech debate, the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), on Tuesday. It was perhaps a speech that set a standard for rhetoric, partisanship and ad hominem debate which I have rarely seen in this Legislature and which none of us ever hopes even to try to emulate. That having been said, that clear and easy decision for, I suspect, all members of the assembly outside of the Minister of Education not to follow that example, does not mean we will not discuss political issues ever again, because we do daily in question period.

I have chosen this afternoon not to treat the budget for the political document it was, but for the economic document it was not. The budget was not, to borrow the words of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), world-class in any sense other than perhaps a world-class flop. Our future demands some performance where the budget offered piecemeal programs. Where Ontarians need real help, the budget offered mere crumbs. Where our province needs planning for the future, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), the Premier and the government chose to plan for 37-day campaigns only.

That is the tragic disappointment of this budget. There is no strategy to provide help for the needy; nothing to provide homes for the homeless or better education for the young; no strategy that looks beyond a 37-day election period, let alone looks to the end of the decade or the century.

Indeed, this budget does not even look as far ahead as this fall. In a few short months we could have—indeed, I, for one, hope we do have—a freer trade agreement with the Americans. Where are the efforts by this government in this budget to help the federal government negotiators shape a deal that will benefit Ontarians? Where are the adjustment plans? This government looks down the road. The Premier has expressed fears about the impact of the comprehensive trade agreement. He had \$35 billion to spend on adjustments in dealing with that fear and he chose to spend not a nickel on it.

What about the transition strategies? What about the contingency plans for successful talks or the failure of the talks? Where are the programs that the Ministry of Industry, Trade

and Technology and the Ministry of Economics, which the Treasurer heads, should have in place to deal with the post-September or October trade negotiations period? There is not a nickel, not a mention, no concern about adjustment programs, nothing.

The budget contains, tragically at this point in Canada's history, a single paragraph of yet again ambivalent rhetoric on the freer trade issue. It acknowledges the critical importance of the issue but fails to deal with it in any way whatsoever. It does not even nod at it. It does not lift a finger for the people who may be helped and the people who may be hurt by a freer trade agreement.

This budget begs these questions. Has it changed Ontario in any way? Will people look back on May 20, 1987, three, four or five years from today and say: "That was a turning point for Ontario. That day was the date upon which Mr. Nixon turned around the deficit situation. That was the day Mr. Nixon began to pay off the provincial debt. That was the day when he began to build the adjustment programs that have allowed us to prosper in the past five years. That was the day when our education system was put on a strong footing. That was the day when our farmers, after years of worry and concern and being thrown off the land, were finally given the kind of support their counterparts in Europe and the United States get"?

Did any of those things happen? Was May 20, 1987, the day when Ontarians could say it was the day when the increasing tax burden was rolled back? They cannot say that. Was May 20, 1987, the day that people in the north could look back and say was the day when the enormous prosperity of southern Ontario was finally redistributed to people in the north? Was that the day when people in eastern Ontario could say, "We have observed what is happening in Toronto and the Golden Horseshoe; now this government has decided to share some of that job growth and some of that wealth with eastern Ontario"? No. The people in eastern Ontario got \$5 million; that is what they got.

Mr. Sterling: And an office.

Mr. Grossman: Oh yes, let me not forget; the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) reminds me they also got an office in Pembroke.

The heritage of previous governments has also been abandoned in this budget. Nothing in it approaches the kind of innovation that helped the Treasurer get the prosperity he so easily squanders today. Nothing in it approaches the technology centres, the initiation of the tax grants program for seniors or the building of 15

universities and 22 colleges. They got \$1 million each.

Which of yesterday's budget measures, I ask, are going to stand the test of time as monuments to creativity or foresight of the government in 1987? Will it be the 13 miles, as the NDP critic says, of northern highway? We calculated it may be 26, depending on where they build it; but will it be 13 or 20 or 22 miles of northern highway? Is this the answer?

Will it be the \$14 million—but wait a minute, over three years—not to put in sewer and water facilities, not to upgrade water and sewage systems all across the province; no, \$14 million over three years to assess the need and to have more studies with regard to the sewage and water systems?

May 20, 1987, marked the passing of an incredible opportunity for this province: unprecedented provincial revenues, significant economic growth, unrestricted options for meeting the challenges of the future. If the Treasurer were here I would remind him that it is an opportunity no Treasurer has ever had in this province and maybe in this country, and it is an opportunity which will not be offered again soon.

Before yesterday I confess I was a bit envious of the Treasurer. Not because he is on the government side of the House and I am on the other but because of the tremendous opportunity he and he alone was offered by the current prosperity. It was one of those times when you sit there and you say, "Here we are: \$35 billion, \$8 billion more than Mr. Davis, Mr. Miller and Mr. Grossman had."

Here the Treasurer sat with the flexibility to do whatever he wanted. He had the flexibility to address the underfunding he whines about. He had the opportunity to put the four-lane highways across the north. He had the opportunity to make some significant changes in the education system. He had the opportunity, I say to the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson), to look after all the kids in portable classrooms in the Durham and York regions; but he did none of that.

He could have looked at the provincial deficit. I remember when he used to complain about it before he owned it. He had the opportunity to say, after all those years of complaining about it while in opposition, "I, Robert Nixon, can stand up and eliminate the deficit." He chose to increase it.

It was an opportunity squandered. I feel no envy; I feel anger. The Liberal Party, under a variety of leaders including the current Treasurer, had 42 years on the opposition

benches to think of nothing else but how it would do things better and differently. If there is one core sin in this budget, it is the absolute complacency about the future and the apparent paralysis, the apparent incompetence to do anything about that future. That incompetence and complacency ooze from every page, every paragraph and every sentence in this budget.

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The issue is not who among us has a plan to deal with prosperity; that is not the issue. Prosperity is easy to deal with in government. In a civilized society, the reason we are elected, the reason we come to this forum and the reason we want to serve in government is so we can discharge our responsibilities to plan for maximum protection and maximum opportunity for people when there is not prosperity; not how to find ways to squander money in the midst of prosperity, not how to spend for today but how to protect people against a lack of prosperity tomorrow and how to ensure that we do not see again the kind of recessions we have seen too often in this country.

The job of government is not to deal with prosperity but to do some other things, to do collectively what individual citizens cannot do, to lead by example. Simply put, there are no better words: to invest in the future; and they did not. They went on a shopping spree. There were lots of things the Treasurer could have done. He chose to do none of them.

He could have wiped out the deficit. He could have done that without new taxes because he finished last year with \$1.2 billion in extra money, with a deficit that is \$1.3 billion. If the Treasurer had just been able to control his own spending last year, if the Treasurer had just been able to say to his colleagues: "The budget I announced last year stands. You will get no extra money. Don't overspend your budgets. I am taking all the extra money and paying off the deficit." If he had just controlled the spending, if he had just lived up to his own financial planning last year, this province would have a balanced budget today.

It would have been such an important symbol, a more important symbol than saying, "You in your homes, you disabled people, you pensioners, you live on your fixed incomes; but the government of Ontario will take all the money it can get, squander it and not pay off the debt it has incurred." Paying off the deficit, reducing it, would have shown a commitment to future fiscal strength, the kind of fiscal strength that would allow the Treasurer to spend more when the

economy went down to help the people in the regions of this province who will genuinely be in need again.

What financial flexibility is a later Treasurer, of whichever party, going to have if the best we can do in the height of an enormous economic recovery is to get the deficit down by \$300 million? What is going to happen at the slightest tick? Interest rates are going up today. Inflation is ticking up again. We begin the next recession, whenever it comes, with unemployment rates in Sault Ste. Marie of 15 per cent to 20 per cent, in Sudbury of up around 12 per cent or 13 per cent—

Mr. Villeneuve: Thirteen per cent in Cornwall.

Mr. Grossman: Thirteen per cent in Cornwall. All across the north, it averages 10 per cent or 11 per cent. That is the unemployment rate in economically good times.

What flexibility is the current or a future Treasurer going to have when times get bad? He is not going to be able to borrow any money. The deficit is going to become a Trudeau-MacEachen deficit. It is going to be uncontrollable. The time to deal with deficits is in good times, not bad times. The Treasurer missed that chance. He did nothing.

It would have been prudent and far-sighted for the Treasurer to have reduced taxes, to have said that when the average Ontario family is paying 50 per cent of its income in taxes, that is enough. It would have been a chance for the Treasurer to say: "You know what? The Liberal government increased 19 taxes since coming to office. You know what? Personal income tax is up 60 per cent since the Liberals came to office. You know what? Land transfer tax is up approximately 223 per cent since we came to office."

It would have been an opportunity for him to say to people across the north to whom he broke a commitment to lower gas prices that he took too much in his gasoline tax increase. It would have been a chance for him to say: "I made a mistake. I took more than I needed, so here are some tax dollars back." However, he did nothing to reduce taxes. He could have made a massive investment in the education system. He could have matched the speeches given by the Premier and the minister all over this province, talking about a commitment to the education system. He could have backed up those commitments but he chose not to.

He could have done something about the thousands of temporary buildings that masquerade as classrooms across this province. He could have done something about the gap between the

grants for high school students and those that are afforded the school boards for elementary school students. There is no more eloquent proponent of that than the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis), who understands what the real educational needs are, who does not come to this House, as does the Minister of Education, reading comic books or novels as an answer to serious questions about the educational system.

The Treasurer could have done something about the massive pressure of education costs on mill rates and the pressure of those mill rates on senior citizens who pay far too much education tax long after they have paid more than their fair share, but he chose to do hardly anything. He puts in one pocket what he takes from the other. Of course, he had to do something about the property tax credits because his education funding policies are increasing property taxes in every home in this province.

The Treasurer could have said yesterday that he will begin to fight inflation in this province. He should know that the rate of inflation in Ontario is now the highest in the country. He should know that one of the most important contributors to inflation is government spending and government taxes. He is the chief villain in that. The Treasurer should know that inflation is the nastiest and most regressive tax possible on people with fixed incomes, on the poor, on the people who have no defence; and yes, on the disabled whose pockets he reached into.

We are not talking about prudence; the Treasurer did not exercise it. Enough of this "parsimonious Bob Nixon" rhetoric. He has become the highest spending, highest taxing, highest deficit Treasurer in memory. He chose not to do what a prudent farmer would do: plant now so he could harvest later. He chose not to do that. He chose not to put the future first. He put the election first. He chose complacency. He chose caution. He chose wallowing in today over planning for tomorrow. He played havoc with the genuine economic interests of our people.

People will look back on this budget as the key decision point in the life of this government, however long that might be. They will look back on this budget and say this was when the government decided it would squander that money, while it was high in the polls, while it was riding high on the hog, while everything was going its way and while the boom was producing record revenues. They will say May 20, 1987, was the day the government decided that essentially its plan for the future was no plan. This was the day, people will say, when it

decided mediocrity was enough. This was the day it decided to let the future of Ontario down.

The government was under no pressure from the New Democratic Party or from the Progressive Conservatives that forced it into a do-nothing budget. It has the funds, the capacity and the political leverage to write its own ticket: no excuses, no begging off, no accord to complain about in terms of restricting its flexibility. No commitments anywhere other than the commitments it gave to the people; it broke that commitment.

It has decided now to be a shopper, not an investor. Is that what the Treasurer waited for for so many years, to get into office and be a shopper, not an investor? There he was shopping: a little bit here, a little bit there; but no program, no plan, no commitment to produce future revenue-producing assets, no investment in young people; wasters, not savers. Enough with the parsimonious; this was wasting, not saving.

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They decided, as this Premier always does, to take the easy way, the way of least friction, least controversy; and certainly the role of least leadership. I admit that governments go through cycles where they choose the approach of least friction because they determine that is what society then needs and even that it is in their own political interests at that point. But I say to the Treasurer, who has been around here for a long time, governments do not get to that cycle until they have been around for 10 or 15 years. He reached it in two years. Let us face it, the Treasurer reached it the moment he felt he could break the commitment and ignore those who are solely responsible for his being in office, the New Democrats.

When they were left on their own, they were adrift. When they were left without an imposed agenda, they had no agenda. When they were left without an economic plan, flawed as it was, they had no plan. When they were left without being forced to fund education, they did not fund education. When they were left without a requirement to meet their commitment on day care, they forgot about day care. When they felt they were safe in ignoring pay equity, they said to the private sector, "You put it in; no money in this budget for pay equity."

Mr. Callahan: Alleluia.

Mr. Grossman: I pause. Mr. Speaker, I would like the record to show that the member for Brampton has indicated "Alleluia" to the thought of pay equity being forgotten by his government.

I invite the member to stand up and correct the record if I have been wrong in so doing.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Do not worry about it.

Mr. Villeneuve: The Treasurer is a little nervous about it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sure the members of the official opposition would like their leader to have an opportunity to speak, so they should not be quite so noisy. Carry on, member.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer has almost wiped out, but fortunately not totally, my need to complete my remarks. He epitomized his approach to budgeting and the government's approach to pay equity with that last interjection, "Do not worry about it." That is it. I wish I had thought of using that quote yesterday to describe the Treasurer's approach and budget because that is what it is, "Do not worry about it."

I say to the Treasurer that I am worried about it. Those of us who have put in a lot of years around here trying to get the financing and spending under control are worried about what is happening. Those of us who saw this province through the tough years, trying to hold together health care, social services, the education system and a highways network when it was not easy to do, when there was no money around, are worried about it. Now is the time to reinforce that system. Yes, we are worried about it. Those of us who tried hard to give Ontario the lowest tax rate in the country are worried about the 19 tax increases the Treasurer brought in.

I say to the Treasurer that those of us who have children in the school system are worried about all the portables. We are worried about the lack of computers. We are worried about the underfunding in the school system. We are worried about his priorities. His attitude is, "Do not worry about it." We are here to worry about it, and unlike this disgraceful document, we will have a plan to deal with those things when the public looks to us.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: What a thin, rag-tag mob.

Mr. Grossman: The member should not say that about his absent colleagues.

I want to deal with some of the specifics in this effort by the Treasurer. He has learned to say things without embarrassment, but even he was embarrassed to refer to the high-tech council. Let me just say that last year's centre-piece—at least there was one last year—was the high-technology fund of \$1 billion; \$100 million a year.

Mr. Laughren: You have learned your lesson. There is no centre-piece this year.

Mr. Grossman: That is right. They did learn their lesson. There is no centre-piece this year.

It was \$100 million and the Treasurer says—listen to this, Mr. Speaker—"I acknowledge that, in setting our first-year spending plan...we allocated more money, as it turned out, than could be prudently spent." That is an understatement. They allocated exactly \$98 million more than they were able to spend. This being a \$100-million-a-year fund, I thought we would find that this year the fund was \$198 million, so that in two years they might catch up to their commitment; but no, it is only \$100 million this year.

It is interesting that when I look at the back, do the members know what I find? I find that one line item has disappeared and is replaced by the high-technology fund; gone is the Board of Industrial Leadership and Development fund. All the Treasurer did was take the BILD money, cut it in half and move it over and call it the technology fund. There is one difference—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: A lot of difference.

Mr. Grossman: A lot of difference, yes. We spent the BILD money for the people of this province, planning for their future. The Treasurer gave it away. The government did not spend it; it spent \$2 million on high technology. What they bought in high technology was a big headline, a lawsuit and an Ontario Provincial Police investigation. That is their contribution to high technology. That is their high-technology world.

I have held all the senior economic portfolios on that side. I happen to know the civil servants in the government. I know the skills they have. For the Treasurer to be moving out all the decisions and all the powers of the ministries of Treasury and Economics and Industry, Trade and Technology over to a part-time technology club is ridiculous. That is why he cannot spend the money. He says so in his budget. He says, "The members of the council are busy people in their own chosen and widely varying fields."

Why is he giving them all the power? Why is he telling them to do a study—would you believe?—in 1987 on our competitiveness? The Japanese are doing something about it. The Germans and French are doing something about it. The Americans are doing something about it. The Treasurer is saying to all the part-time members of the Premier's technology council, "Would you study our competitiveness and by the end of 1987 tell us what maybe we ought to do in 1988."

The Treasurer has lost three years. He did not need the studies; they were there. I have been there. The studies are on the shelf. They have been done. They have been done by the Economic Council of Canada, the C. D. Howe Institute, the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, the cabinet office, the industry associations and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. They are all there and the Treasurer is asking some part-time people who meet once or twice a month to develop the economic plan for his government. Of course he had nothing to report in his budget: he has handed it over; he has given it away.

For him to have the gall to stand up yesterday and say that the council now has formulated government guidelines to govern a "rigorous review of all proposals"—am I hearing right? This from a government whose track record on high technology is to give \$17.5 million to Abe Schwartz for Exploracom, only to find out that it ends up in a lawsuit; the thing is cancelled, bankruptcy declared and it is in the courts; or to Wyda Systems with the intervention of the spouse of a cabinet minister; or Graham Software where the government invested—what, \$4 million?

Mr. Gillies: Five million dollars.

Mr. Grossman: Five million dollars and got back \$200,000. Come on, Treasurer.

Let me move to the education area. It was identified by the Premier, the Treasurer and the minister as their top priority. There was nothing in the budget for it. Imagine: their plan is to test student achievement in grades 11 and 12 in 1992 in math and science. That is their plan for the education system.

To address the student drop-out rate, they are adding money to expand the old co-operative education program that was not launched last year by the Liberal government, as the budget claimed, but was previously established by the previous government. If truth in advertising applied to budgets, the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) would have the Treasurer before his ministry every day.

1550

To address overcrowding and modernization of schools, let members imagine this. The increased capital funding for this year is \$13 million over the previous year. Thirteen million dollars will buy not a world-class high school but a mediocre high school facility. Count them. The total increase in the Ministry of Education's capital budget for this current year is one, but to

quote the Treasurer, "Do not worry about it." One is the increase.

Let me say to those members who are in high-growth areas, the York and Durham regions alone have an increased demand for schools, acknowledged by the ministry, of 16 schools each and every year. Sixteen schools each and every year in two regions, and the Treasurer gave the minister an additional one—count it: one—for 1987. This Treasurer, who is sitting on \$8 billion increased revenue, had one new school for the Minister of Education for this year. I wonder which lucky school board is going to get the one additional school out of the 16 new ones needed.

This afternoon, the New Democratic Party was raising the amount of moneys that have been offered to the domed stadium. The NDP was not saying it was opposed to it. They were pointing out the priorities. They were pointing out that if the Treasurer stands behind \$30 million—and who knows how much more for the president of the Liberal Party who got the deal—if he had \$30 million there, where is all the other money? The Treasurer had \$30 million for a domed stadium and millions for cheap hamburgers, but he had nothing for the school kids who are being educated in portables.

A friend of mine said to me that this budget will mean something to you only if you are a foreign student eating at McDonald's and looking for a career in the public service. If you are a high school drop-out who has to eat at McDonald's but does not want to and you want only to have a small business or to grow and expand in the private sector and not be employed in the Treasurer's bloated bureaucracy, this budget does nothing. This is a budget which only helps foreign students eating at McDonald's and looking for a career in the public service.

I want to say one more word about education. The Treasurer and I were on the radio together this morning. He said, "Every one knows the government's commitment to education." A commitment is cheap. Putting the dollars on the table is all that matters. I cannot go to all the overcrowded schools in this province, all the classrooms with 35, 38 and 40 kids in them, and say, "Listen, not to worry; they have a commitment to this problem. "They want the money and the Treasurer has the money.

There is no getting around the fact that the education share of the provincial budget was 13.2 per cent last year. Now it is 12.3 per cent. Where did the money go? Who got the money? The 5,000 new civil servants? Cheaper hamburgers? How could the Treasurer drop it from 13.2

per cent to 12.3 per cent and say he has a commitment to education?

Worse still, he has had \$8 billion come in since he took office and this year he is flowing less funds to the school boards than he did last year. Worse still, the share of education paid for by the province, which was 48 per cent when he took office, has now dropped to 44.9 per cent.

Let us understand. The Treasurer will protest and say he has only dropped it to 46 per cent. That is what his ministry staff tells us. Whether it is 46 per cent or 44.9 per cent, it is not 48 per cent. This is a government that actually reduced its support for education across the province from 48 per cent down to at least 46 per cent, and probably down to 44.9 per cent.

The Treasurer this afternoon was ironically and coincidentally asked by both me and the leader of the New Democratic Party about the transfers to school boards. The net transfer for school boards will be down year over year. They will be getting less dollars this year than last year, unless the Treasurer preflows \$330 million again.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Not correct.

Mr. Grossman: It is absolutely correct. If it is not correct, I will take my seat and allow the Treasurer to rise in this House and say that the budget paper is in error on page 64, table C6. I will give the Treasurer the opportunity to stand up on a point of privilege and say that the budget document is wrong in table C6.

It says general legislative grants, \$3,323,000,000; grant flow improvement pre-flows, \$330,000,000; school capital grants, \$134,000,000. That gives a total that is \$60 million less than the totals for this current year, which are \$3,579,000,000 plus \$147,000,000 for the school capital grants.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You are misinterpreting the numbers.

Mr. Grossman: Here it is. If I am misinterpreting the numbers, I only have the numbers the Treasurer offered. He will have the chance in the corridor, in this House, because we will be back to ask the question again. He had six questions this afternoon, six opportunities to stand up and say \$3,323,000,000 is not the right figure for last year, \$3,579,000,000 is not the right figure for this year on GLGs and the grant flow improvement is going to be increased this year. The Treasurer did not say that.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is a 12 per cent improvement.

Mr. Grossman: This year, 1986-87, the Treasurer's preflows were \$330 million. This budget says he is not going to preflow in this year. Either this budget is wrong and the Treasurer has given wrong information in this budget or he is going to give them less new money. There is no other conclusion.

Let us be honest. Ironically, if the Treasurer had said he will preflow \$330 million again, guess what? He would have had to report an increase in the provincial deficit.

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: The member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) lost one job. He should not go looking for another one.

Mr. Mancini: I did not lose a job.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer's budget—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You are supposed to address the chair. You have been around here long enough to know that. Why don't you do that?

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Treasurer, may I say to him—

The Deputy Speaker: Actually, it is to the Speaker, not through the Speaker.

Mr. Grossman: May I say to you, Mr. Speaker, inviting you to relay this to the Treasurer when you get an opportunity, that the school board grants are less this year than they were last year.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Much better.

Mr. Sterling: Direct it to the Speaker.

Mr. Mancini: Keep your mouth shut.

Mrs. Marland: Is that parliamentary language?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. There is unparliamentary language coming a little from my left as well as from my right. Let us just tone that down and let the leader carry on with his speech.

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, I seek your guidance. The Treasurer has said that something I said was not true. If that is parliamentary, then I will accept that; it is inaccurate, but if you believe it is parliamentary, fine. If you believe it is not parliamentary, I invite you to invite him to withdraw that statement.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am rising on a point of order, Mr. Speaker: If by saying it is untrue I offend the honourable member, may I say that it does not represent the facts.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. There is nothing wrong with something being true or correct and so on. It is the manner in which it is stated. It was not an accusation.

Mr. Grossman: I will move on to the balance of my remarks. Suffice to say that if the Treasurer says that what I have said does not represent the facts, he is saying that the budget paper he put out yesterday—page 64, table C6—does not represent the facts, in which case I wonder how many facts and figures in this document are representative of, shall we say, the true picture. It is clear and patently true from the data we have in his budget that the transfer payments will be down this year over last year.

1600

Let me talk about skills training. The minister announced some time ago that a Futures program was going to be introduced. This was two budgets ago. It offered 230,000 job placements for young people in Ontario. The budget yesterday reports 50,000, not 230,000. Which was factually inaccurate?

The ministry and the government clearly do not have the political will to implement what they say they are going to do. They are great at writing the political rhetoric. They are great at talking about their commitment and they are great at putting up the Futures billboards, but the bottom line is that 230,000 people were supposed to be helped.

The Treasurer said in his budget he was going to provide the funding for 230,000 young people but he helped 50,000, about one fifth or 20 per cent of the people he said in his 1985 budget he was going to help. Is that factually correct or not? I got those figures from the budget yesterday which said only 50,000 people have been helped. We looked back at the 1985 budget and that budget said it would help 230,000. Is that factually incorrect?

The Liberals have been 23 months in office. I will tell the Treasurer how many jobs have been created. In those 23 months 112,000 fewer jobs were created than in the 23 months of recession under the previous government. The Treasurer should think of that. In 23 months of staggering economic growth, 112,000 fewer jobs were created than the previous government created in the worst recession in 50 years. How does the Treasurer explain that?

If he had just maintained the previous government's rate of job creation, then the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Ontario would not be 6.4 per cent; it would be 3.5 per cent. If this government had been as skilled at job

creation as the previous government was, the unemployment rate in Ontario would be 3.5 per cent, not 6.4 per cent.

Let me turn now to colleges and universities. We got into it this afternoon with that pathetic announcement of \$1.5 million for every college and university across the province. I fear when this government has \$200 million for 5,000 new bureaucrats and has \$100 million for 15 universities, 22 colleges and the tens of thousands of young people who are going to those institutions. What is the sense of priorities here?

Let us get it on the record. The budget, in its number shuffling—and I know how they do it over there—tries to claim that the increased funding for colleges this year in transfers is 11.5 per cent. Honest accounting indicates it is seven per cent; it is four per cent lower than the increase in 1984.

We talked about economic disparity in this province. I want to address that a little more completely. It is hard to conceive of a government that complacently says in the midst of enormous economic growth in southern Ontario that the unemployment rate in northern Ontario of 10, 11, 12, 14 or 20 per cent in some instances is okay. The Liberal response to it is to have a conference in Sault Ste. Marie and boast in the budget about moving civil servants to northern communities. More bureaucrats; yes, the answer to every problem.

We support the program. How could we not support the program? We put in dozens of community colleges throughout the north. We put in the first northern universities. In most instances transfer payments alone, even with the niggardly funding that this Treasurer is willing to provide, will put more money each year into those communities just to fund the ongoing operations of those colleges and universities than the Ontario Lottery Corp. office in Sault Ste. Marie will in any way.

The colleges and universities, obviously, are a far more important development. They educate our young people and they bring \$10 million, \$15 million, \$20 million in transfer payments every year to those communities. They are far more important. Of course we support the movement of government offices. We started it.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines has not had a minister for almost a year since the flourishing departure of Sky King. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines went to small communities. My colleague the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) took small offices and put them in small communities that

needed the employment so dramatically. Yes, it was only two, three or four people, but in the small communities in which the ministry arrived for the first time, that was a significant development.

Let us not hear about this being a new departure; the moving of government offices. It is not. It is one we support, but let us also not pretend it is an answer. Ask the people in Sault Ste. Marie.

I was in Sault Ste. Marie a couple of weeks ago. I was depressed to see what was happening there. I was depressed, given the enthusiasm of the people there to reconstruct their economy, how that was being thwarted by the government. I was depressed, to see people who had just seen a \$400-million renovation and investment at Algoma Steel, and find out that they want to sell their steel to the United States—and I say to the New Democratic Party that even the union local there wants a freer trade arrangement—they found out that the \$400-million investment was producing hardly any new jobs, partly because this Premier will not do anything for the freer trade talks.

That is more important than a lottery office in Sault Ste. Marie. Does the Treasurer not understand that? Getting them access to foreign markets, letting them sell their seamless pipe and tubing is far more important than the lottery jobs. The lottery jobs are needed, they welcome it; but their unemployment rate is still hovering at 15, 16 or 17 per cent.

What did the Treasurer offer them yesterday? Did he offer them the northern Ontario heritage fund? Come on. The fumbling shown to have occurred by the government, shown to have occurred in agreeing to the softwood lumber tariff, in writing—let us say it clearly: the agreement by this government to the softwood lumber tariff took \$30 million out of the north. Then the Treasurer stood up yesterday and said, “I am going to give you back the \$30 million.”

Is he going to give it back? Did he meet his commitment through the community economic transformation agreement to recycle money to the north? No. What about the northern development fund? That was two years ago, the government’s first promise of a northern development fund. The Treasurer promised \$20 million a year, not \$30 million, and what did he deliver? The first year he promised \$20 million to the north and he gave them what? Was it \$5 million out of \$20 million? Or \$10 million out of \$20 million?

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: He gave them \$2 million.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There is not a very big crowd here to respond.

Mr. Grossman: There may not be a big crowd here but I could put together a better cabinet today from this crowd than the Premier has put together out of that crowd. Does the Treasurer not wish that he had most of his cabinet colleagues leaving? Then his Premier might have the courage to have a cabinet shuffle and put some talent in his cabinet instead of what he has now.

Let us talk about what else this government has done for the north. It spent \$2 million out of \$20 million for the north the first year. The second year it put in a big effort. It spent \$14 million out of the \$20 million. Where did the other \$6 million go? Did it go back to southern Ontario? Where did it go? Did it go for some more civil servants, to fund the 5,000 new civil servants it has, or was it designated for Abe Schwartz to put a technology centre in Metropolitan Toronto? We know one thing. In two years, this government had a \$40-million commitment and it gave them \$17 million. So much for its \$30-million heritage fund.

1610

If you will permit me, Mr. Speaker, I want to find the words in the budget on the northern heritage fund. Listen to this. This is a government that had trouble finding ways to spend \$100 million on high tech with no bureaucracy. Listen to what it is doing for the north:

“The heritage fund will operate under the guidance of the the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.” There is no minister. “He will be assisted in his decisions by a heritage fund advisory council”—they need a council for this—“with representatives from each of the northern development councils.” Imagine this: we have northern development councils in place that are replacing real action, and half of them do not know what their mandates are; they are replacing any action in the north.

Ask the Treasurer what he has done. Ask the Premier. “We have northern development councils in place.” They are not jobs. They do not have new investment. They do not have lower unemployment rates. They do not have money for the northern colleges and universities. They do not have freer trade opportunities for them. What have they got? They have northern development councils, a heritage fund advisory council, a conference in Sault Ste. Marie. That is

what they have got, and now a bureaucracy to hand out \$30 million.

There is only one reason for this bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is set up to make sure they do not spend this \$30 million. They did not spend the millions of dollars, the \$20 million per year, they promised to spend last time.

The Treasurer is holding up my 1984 budget. Let him turn to the page that talks about the new northern Ontario regional development program which was fully subscribed for. The Nordev program was set up in that budget—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: What about your community economic transformation agreement program? What about your child care? What about your social housing? It is all here.

Mr. Grossman: The CETA program was in that budget, and when we were there it was fully subscribed. When this government got there, instead of the \$10 million for CETA, it spent \$500,000. When we were there, the CETA program was put in place and it was invested. It was not squandered. It was not hidden. It was not recycled to Don Smith, domed stadiums or civil servants. That is the reality.

Let me go on to the government's highways program. The most important thing one can do across the north is improve the highway network. The government is sitting on an additional \$8 billion, and what did it add in this budget? Thirteen miles of highway for northern Ontario. Thirteen miles may be a great distance in Brantford, in Brant county, in Paris, but it sure is not very far in northern Ontario. That was it for northern Ontario.

The Treasurer must take the people in the north for the people his former minister describes. He must think the people in northern Ontario can be duped by this sort of nonsense. Those were the people the then minister, the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), described, but they are not that kind of people. They are smart. They are informed. They know when they have been had.

I look forward to the opportunity to go to Kirkland Lake, North Bay, Cochrane, Timmins, Thunder Bay, Marathon, Fort Frances and Rainy River and tell them that he had 13 miles for them, that he promised \$20 million and delivered \$2 million on his northern development fund, that he put no new money in the north and that what he had for them was some jobs from Scarborough.

That is his northern development policy. If the Treasurer, the former minister, the convert from Timiskaming, any of those people want to

criss-cross the north and debate northern issues with me and the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope), the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon), the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy), the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce) and the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves), we will be happy to do that, because on this side we have lots of talent from the north.

We have enough talent from the north to fill the front benches. We have enough talent from the north not to be pushed around by a Treasurer and a Premier who believe in politics and cosmetics; who believe in optics instead of plans and programs; who believe in trivialities instead of actually getting out there and doing something; who believe in throwing crumbs to the people of the north instead of substantive developments. We will meet them on every platform in the north, let me be clear. I and my talented colleagues will be there on every platform in the north, and so will the New Democrats, to talk about the government's record—not its promises, its forgotten campaign promises, but its record: 13 miles.

Eastern Ontario: I talked about it earlier. Let me say only that in this case we can see what happened. Someone came into Treasury and said: "Treasurer, there is nothing in the budget about eastern Ontario. What are we going to do?" The Treasurer said: "Let us do what we did with everything else. Let us do what we did with the education capital. We will not promise to do it this year; we will make a big announcement about next year. Let us do what we did with the high-tech fund. We will not do it this year, but let us just announce a big fund and spread it out."

So what do they do? They did not even announce a big fund; it was \$25 million for eastern Ontario. Northern Ontario at least got a promise of \$30 million a year, I think; but eastern Ontario got \$25 million for five years. Imagine the significance of \$5 million a year. I am surprised the Treasurer did it, because I guess that would get him about 100 new civil servants. That is what he gave eastern Ontario—as much as he spends on 100 civil servants. He has 5,000 new ones. He gave eastern Ontario 100. That was it.

Mr. Brandt: They got a new office too.

Mr. Grossman: And the office in Pembroke; let us not forget the office in Pembroke. Five million dollars, an office in Pembroke; and let us not forget the ones that have the Japanese quaking, the self-help offices for small business in eastern Ontario.

Let me say a word about agriculture. If there is one area where I thought the parsimonious farmer might have dealt with some sensitivity with what has happened in the past three or four years, it is the agricultural community.

Let me step back and say that, regardless of who would have been in office in the last two or three years, the agricultural community in Canada was bound to go through difficult times. It would be unfair for the New Democrats or the Conservatives to suggest the past couple of years would have been markedly easier in terms of the international pressures if we had been in office, or the New Democrats. It has been a crushing time. It has been brought on by the Europeans and the Americans subsidizing, undercutting the end price of the products grown and produced in Ontario.

I really did expect therefore that the Treasurer having enough money finally to compete a little bit with the Americans and the Europeans, not to mention the Quebec government or the Saskatchewan government or the Alberta government, we would at least see something put in place yesterday to allow us to compete, to keep our farmers on the farm.

What did we get? Unbelievably, we got a program to help farmers repair their farms. I do not oppose that program. Improvement of farm management techniques, encouraging farm safety and machinery repairs are important, but to trivialize it by saying, "We will offer you some money so that you can repair your tractor while the bank is foreclosing on your neighbour," is really tragic.

The Treasurer had a choice to spend a lot of money saying to farmers, "We are going to secure a fair and reasonable return for the products you grow," or "We will fix up your tractor." The Treasurer went for fixing up their tractors. Instead of keeping them on the farm, the Treasurer said, "For those of you who are able to survive, we will let you clean up your tractor and fix your fence." How can that be? Mr. Speaker, coming from the area you come from, you will know the situation farmers are going through, whether it is tobacco, cash crops or whatever. This Treasurer gave them the back of his hand. He said, as he said about pay equity a moment ago, "Do not worry about it." Money to fix up tractors—nothing to allow them to compete with the Americans.

This party has put together an alternative, the family farm security act. It is an expensive program, but with \$8 billion available the Treasurer could easily have funded it. It simply

would have said to farmers: "Here is a guaranteed price for the products you make. It will keep you in business until 1992, until the Americans and Europeans get sorted out at their General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks, we hope." It would have made sure that the foreclosures stopped, that farmers get the single thing they want most of all, which is just to know that when they work hard, when they are productive, when they are as efficient as any farmers in the world, if not more efficient, they will get a fair price for the products they produce. This Treasurer said: "Forget about that. We will give you money to fix up your tractor." This was, to use the favourite word of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), a world-class opportunity to save our agricultural community.

1620

May 20, 1987, should have been a day upon which the Treasurer rose in the House and said, "We are putting in an agricultural program which will ensure that we will not see any more farm foreclosures for the next five years, a program which would say to farmers, 'From this day forward, be productive and efficient, and we will ensure that you get a fair price for the products you make.'"

This Treasurer backed off from that. He had the money to do it. They lacked the political will to do it. They believe the act of the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) is going to carry them through. It may carry them through politically, but farmers are dropping off every day. It is a tragedy that the missed opportunity of May 20, 1987, will be a monument on the farm fence of every abandoned farm throughout this province, because that was the day the foreclosures could have been stopped. The money was there. The need was there. The political will was absent; it was gone. Let us face it, if there is no political need, there is no political will in this government. If there is no political requirement, there is no economic necessity. They will not do it.

The budget goes on to something called a "Planning for Growth" segment. In the housing area, it boggles the mind to think of what we have been through in this House with this Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling). There have been 217 new employees since the passing of Bill 51. If someone will do the mathematics for me, that is about \$1 million. Will someone do 217 times \$50,000?

We called the ministry staff this very morning to ask how many new rental units were built and how much money was spent out of the Treasur-

er's budget last year. Members will not believe this answer. We asked the ministry staff how many new rental units were built last year, how many new subsidized units were built last year and how much of last year's budget was spent. The Ministry of Housing staff said they did not know; they said they had no idea. The minister has spent \$1 million to hire 217 new employees, but he does not know how many new rental units he has built. I know the kind of money they spent on bureaucrats was enough to have constructed 200 new rental units, but for this government, it is more bureaucrats instead of more rental units, more hamburgers instead of more computers for the kids. That is this government's plan.

Health—I know a little bit about the health care field, and I looked in the budget to find the massive new programs. I expected, if only for political reasons, that we would have seen a massive new commitment to community-based programs; that we would have seen the results of two years of having a so-called minister responsible for senior citizens' affairs; that we would have seen more community-based programs, decent care for our elderly across a whole range of areas, mental health programs so cryingly needed, supportive housing for ex-psychiatric patients, just to name a few of those areas so near and dear to me during my time there.

There is nothing in here. Another study. The health area is replete with studies. Does anyone need to tell the government about the need to co-ordinate our seniors' care? Does anyone need to tell them about the need for more community-based programs? This year, they had the money. Interestingly, why did they not give the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) the money? I will tell members why. Because the Treasurer had to keep the money for the not-yet-settled fee negotiations with their favourite group, the doctors.

I can hear the conversation. The Treasurer says: "Murray, I know you would like to do something, but you know, we really angered the doctors last year. Peterson had to score some heavy political points at their expense, but it worked for us politically." So the Treasurer says, "This year we're going to have to accommodate them."

Did the Treasurer accommodate them in the budget? We asked the Treasury staff yesterday how much was in the budget to accommodate the fee negotiation settlement. The answer was zero. The answer from Treasury staff is that they have built in no increase in the estimates, in the

allocations put in the budget yesterday for an increase over inflation for the doctors.

I really would have liked to have been at the Ontario Medical Association this morning to have heard their reaction when they found out that the negotiations they have been having for four or five months with the government are done in the context of the Treasurer having told the Minister of Health, "There is no money in the budget for any increase over inflation." Why did he just not call him up and say, "You only get inflation"?

Or is there an alternative? Did the Treasurer say to the Minister of Health: "Look, Murray, we have a problem. Apart from what I put in the budget"—because he says he is not going to put the Ontario health insurance plan settlement in the budget—"I have to find money for a one per cent or two per cent increase for the doctors, which is \$50 million minimum."

So what he says is: "I cannot even put that in the budget. If there are any new programs, they have to wait until after we pay the doctors." So we get the worst of both worlds and the Treasurer gets the best of both worlds. There is no new spending on health programs. Save the money to pay off the doctors. Do not declare it in the budget.

If the Treasurer plans to allow the minister to give the OMA anything over the rate of inflation, by his staff's own admission up goes the deficit again. It proves that this budget once again understates the deficit position. But more importantly, as we said last year, the banning of extra billing was a reform which the government thought was needed. We did not. This budget bears testimony to the fact that the price of that reform was to give up all the other reforms.

I suspect that the Minister of Health had nothing to say to the Treasurer, that the Minister of Health had no ability in the system to bring in the community-based care, to work around the medical profession and the other professions to co-ordinate care for the elderly, to do something about training more geriatric specialists, to do something about improving homecare programs, to get into the homemaker programs in a serious way. He did not because he could not deliver, because he has no goodwill out through the system.

Let me go farther. After the good, early days when the minister made all the speeches, I believe, when you look back on the record in the two years the current Minister of Health has been in his job, has he got any health care reforms, save for extra billing, to boast of? I am now

convinced that Dr. Allen Dyer, the deputy minister, and the bureaucrats are in full control of the ministry. They are riding high and hard on this minister, who does not have the political will or the skill to run the ministry. He is now a slave of the ministry, a slave of the bureaucracy and not serving the health care system.

On the environment, let me say, as I said earlier, that the sewer and water needs across this province were identified a long time ago, at \$160 million. This Treasurer not only did not give \$14 million out of the \$160 million for sewer and water programs but also put in \$14 million over three years to study the condition of municipal water and sewer systems. I am surprised he did not refer it to the Premier's high technology council.

How could the minister possibly have done that? His commitment to the system, to the environment, was a \$14-million study to find out what everyone knows already. If the Treasurer does not know that, if the Ministry of the Environment does not know that, then they are admitting abject failure after two years in office, not even to have a catalogue of the sewer and water needs across the province, let alone to begin to address them.

1630

Child care, in the "Equity for all Citizens" section, laughingly so-called child care: How many times do the Premier and the Treasurer think they can get up and promise a bold new child care policy for the province? They have been doing it since June 2, 1985. They were required to do it on June 2, 1985. They have not done it. It is not to be believed that the fallback position, after two years, is not a child care program.

We may agree or we may disagree on the program, I say to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) who is now here. I suspect we and the New Democrats will have different views on it, but he has no view on it. He has had two years to develop a child care policy. When he took office, he committed to the New Democrats to having one. After two years, unbelievably, what he is saying is he is waiting on the federal government.

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: Let me say, after two years in office, this government may believe that is an adequate answer to go to the people with, whenever the Premier wants to do it, and say to the women of this province, to the people needing child care, to the people in the education system, to our students, to our young people, to

the people in the north needing transportation systems, the Liberals may believe it is okay to go and say, "Yes, but you did not have it before we got to office either." They may think it is sufficient to say, "Yes, but we put in a little bit more money than you were getting when the government changed." They may think that is adequate.

Let me say to them the public of Ontario said in 1985 that sort of thing will not work. They were looking in 1985 for parties that had a plan for the future. They will be looking next time for parties that speak to the future.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We sure did not see it with yours.

Mr. Grossman: Let me say to the minister, who said they did not see it in ours, we got more seats than his party did and the same number of votes so they clearly did not see it in either party, if he wants to take that approach.

Let me say to the minister, he has had two years to develop his approach. He does not have one. He has had two years and \$8 billion to play with and his approach is to take money from the disabled to fund what he is not even doing.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Perhaps, if the leader would address the chair and not the members on the other side, there would be less disruption.

Mr. Gillies: He was provoked.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Brantford. If you address the chair, you will not likely get the interjections. I would ask members of the government not to interject.

Mr. Grossman: Let me say to the Speaker that this government may believe the answer to every question raised on every issue is to say it is a little bit more money or it is better than the Tories did. Candidly, that is not going to suffice for the people. We are going to go to the people and the New Democrats are going to go to the people with plans for the future and with alternatives.

The Liberals' answer so far is to stick their tongues out and say it is better than it was before. Let me say to the minister, the needs have grown far more quickly than his devotion to the cause. The needs have grown far more quickly than the dollars given by the Treasurer. In the housing area, in the social services area, in the environmental area, in the health area and certainly in the north, the needs have grown far more quickly than the dollars have—the dollars are there—but far more quickly than the commitment has. I say

to the minister, if that is the Liberal policy next time, we will be happy to take the Liberals on.

Let me say to the minister that I was surprised to hear the major thrust on child care in the budget, one which essentially leans on the federal programs with a prospect of a federal child care program instead of having a provincial alternative. I was surprised to see a government that has \$8 billion extra to spend, beg off upon federal committees, federal studies, beg off for another six months or a year, waiting upon federal action when it has the fiscal capacity here to do it itself.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Our money is in this budget. We are not waiting for anything.

Mr. Grossman: Of course the minister is waiting. He announced no new policy.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Our money is in this budget: \$1 million.

Mr. Grossman: When the minister is prepared to stand up with a new child care policy for the province, I will take my seat, all of us will take our seats, and listen. Try it on Monday in question period or in statements. Stand up with a new child care policy.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: You go ahead.

Mr. Grossman: I should go ahead? The minister should look at his office. The name on the door currently is his name. He has the power to do it, he has the responsibility to do it, he has the money to do it and he will not do it. He should bring forward his policy.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Epp): Order.

Mr. Grossman: They beg off on the national program at the very time when the Premier is going to Ottawa to sign the new national accord which gives them the right to opt out of the federal day care program.

What is the game plan here? The families in Ontario waiting for child care are entitled to know whether he has the money, whether he is actually going to participate in the federal child care program, why he is getting the right to opt out of the child care program. Is his Premier committed to participating in the national child care program—

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is not going to be implemented for three years; read the record. The new accord is in effect for three years. You do not know anything about it; three years.

Mr. Grossman: There is the minister again saying they have done more in three years, dah-de-dah-dah. That is inadequate. For the

families who do not have child care in this province, that answer is not an answer. The minister has the money, let us have the program.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick has the floor.

Mr. Grossman: I want to talk about the single largest scar of many that will live on this Treasurer and this Minister of Community and Social Services regardless of what their futures hold. Thirteen thousand disabled people in this province were sent \$150 by the federal government of this country, effective January 1, 1987. Those 13,000 disabled people were categorically given by the federal government \$150 more per month effective January 1, 1987. The federal government of this country said very clearly, by way of a letter sent to the Minister of Community and Social Services, "Pass the money on to the disabled, the 13,000 disabled who get guaranteed annual income system for the disabled benefits and the Canada pension plan." They clearly said that was money, all of which is intended for the disabled. The government chose to pass on \$50. The government chose to pass \$50 million on—

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Pretty touchy about it.

Mr. Grossman: He should be touchy. He is not as touchy as the disabled. He has taken \$100 a month out of their pockets. Let us talk about the disabled. They are more sensitive. If I were a minister whose executive assistant is making \$50,000 a year and I was paying the disabled \$7,200 a year, I would be touchy, and he should be embarrassed. It is a travesty in Ontario.

His government gave the minister's executive assistant a bigger raise than the entire income he is forcing the disabled people to live on in this province. The raise for his executive assistant was more money than the disabled are expected to live on in this province. That is what it is. His executive assistant got a \$20,000-a-year increase, an increase to \$60,000, and the disabled live on \$7,000 a year. It is an absolute disgrace in Ontario that he continues to do that.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We gave it to 85,000 disabled, not 13,000. We gave them three times as much.

An hon. member: Resign.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, why don't you shut the minister up so the debate can continue?

The Acting Speaker: Would members please cut out the interruptions and let the Leader of the Opposition continue?

1640

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: He doesn't know what he's talking about.

Mr. Grossman: He is mean-spirited.

Mr. Gillies: Throw him out.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: Take control of the House, Mr. Speaker, and tell the minister to keep his peace. We have had enough.

The Acting Speaker: Order, order.

Mr. Grossman: I am going to get these facts on the record, in spite of the nervousness and protestations of the Minister of Community and Social Services.

The 13,000 disabled people in this province, who are living on \$7,200 a year were getting Canada pension plan cheques as part of their \$7,200. The federal government sent a \$150 increase in the CPP portion to those disabled people and told the minister and told the government that all of that \$150 was to go to those 13,000 disabled persons. The government finds itself in this position. It decided to reduce the Gains-D program by \$100 for those people and pass on only \$50 to the disabled people. The net result is as follows: \$150 was sent from Ottawa to the disabled people directly in increased CPP. Did it all get there? Yes, it all got there all right, but the minister reduced the Gains-D cheque coming from the province to those 13,000 people by \$100 a month consequent to yesterday's budget.

Those facts are not controverted by the minister and cannot be. Let us restate it. There was an increase of \$150 a month in the CPP cheques to the 13,000 disabled people in this province. When the provincial government saw that, it reduced the Gains-D cheque to those 13,000 people by \$100 a month, a net saving to the Treasurer of \$100 a month on 13,000 people. There is no getting around the fact that the Treasurer simply took 13,000 people and reduced their Gains-D cheques by an average of \$100 a month for each and every month of the year. That is exactly the way the system works.

Furthermore, in yesterday's budget the Treasurer, by way of trying to explain the taking of two out of the three dollars out of the pockets of the disabled in this province, went on to suggest that the \$50 he was allowing to get through will cost \$54 million. I will read it directly, "This change will cost \$45 million this fiscal year and \$54 million in a full year." The Treasurer's staff yesterday, under questioning, and the Treasurer in the House today, under questioning, admitted

that statement, shall we say, does not represent the provincial contribution. It is not \$54 million a year. Half of the amount of \$54 million that is paid out by the province is paid to the province first by the federal government. So it is not \$54 million; \$54 million is not the net cost to the Treasurer. The net cost to the Treasurer is, at most, \$27 million.

On top of that, for 13,000 of those people, he has reduced the Gains cheque by \$100 a month. The true cost, if it had been reported accurately in the budget statement, is about \$15 million, as his staff admitted to us over the phone this morning.

The minister complains that he has increased funding and we should not be protesting. If he believes he has increased the funding by \$54 million, as reported in the budget, for the sake of accuracy and fairness, he should call the Treasury staff and ask, "What is the real net increase offered by the province?" He will find out the real net increase is \$15 million.

Let us put this in context. To 87,000 disabled people in the province, the Treasurer gave \$15 million in additional income, \$2.5 million less than the government gave Abe Schwartz last year for his Exploracom project. The fight, the argument and the debate will not stop in this House or anywhere across this province until the minister gives the disabled people in this province the \$150 they are entitled to and stops taking \$100 a month out of their pockets. That is what he is doing.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis), the minister and the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) are not in their seats. There are many members not in their seats. They should be particularly quiet.

Mr. Grossman: I want to finish my comments on the disabled. I do not want to incur the minister's wrath. I will not say he repeats the "big lie," but he repeats the inaccurate statement that they have given \$54 million.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Fifty-four million dollars is right.

Mr. Grossman: I say to the minister, this afternoon the Treasurer, and this morning his staff, admitted that the net cost to the province is \$15.6 million.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Don't be ridiculous. What about education? What about health costs? They are all gross figures. Don't be so stupid.

Mr. Grossman: We discussed that. We want to know how much the minister gave the

disabled. He should stand up and admit that he gave \$15 million, not \$54 million. He had more than enough to do all of those things.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Under standing order 10, I will adjourn the House for 10 minutes.

The House recessed at 4:47 p.m.

1657

Mr. Grossman: I had hoped that we had adequately gone over the problem that the disabled are having getting the money the federal government has sent to them, but when we broke a few minutes ago, the minister was seeming to still misunderstand the issue. So perhaps we will begin again.

In January, the federal government increased Canada pension plan payments to the disabled who were getting CPP, 13,000 of them in Ontario. The federal minister, in a letter sent out last week to the provincial ministers, said as follows: "I wrote to you in August 1986 to express my concerns and to ask you"—the minister—"to give every consideration to those individuals with major expense items who might as a result of the CPP disability insurance cease to be eligible for social assistance and related non-cash benefits. While I did not use the specific phrase in my letter, it was my intention that the provinces would pass on the increases. I assumed this would occur."

On page 2, several paragraphs later, he went on to say, "I am prepared to allow for the exclusion, as of January 1, of increases in the CPP flat rate benefits for disabled contributors from the definition of income maintenance payments"—that is, the \$7,200 a year—"with respect to the current social assistance beneficiaries. The effect of this decision will be that provinces, in order to obtain cost sharing under CAP, will not be required to deduct these payments from social assistance payments."

Let me repeat that. It says, "The effect of this decision is that the provinces, in order to obtain cost sharing under CAP, will not be required to deduct these payments from social assistance payments."

What the provincial government in Ontario did was in fact deduct these particular payments from social assistance payments. That is factually what this government did. It is exactly what the federal minister said he did not expect to happen with that money.

1700

The federal minister goes on: "The barrier to the passing on of the CPP increases has been the possibility that provinces would have to incur

significant additional costs and therefore...confident that all provinces will pass on these increases now that they can be assured they will not incur any additional costs in doing so."

Here it is. The federal minister says: "The \$150 is meant to be passed on to the 13,000 disabled in Ontario who receive CPP." The government of Ontario chose not to. What happened in Ontario was that those 13,000 disabled got a \$150 increase from the federal government, and had their guaranteed annual income cheques reduced by the province by \$100, so the disabled ended up \$50 ahead of the game and not \$150 ahead of the game.

The net result of that is that the provincial Treasurer benefits. Instead of money being in the pockets of the disabled people of this province, it is in the pockets of the Treasurer and maybe the 5,000 civil servants the government hired for \$200 million a year. One place it is not is in the hands of the disabled.

So that no one can be confused, let us restate it again. The federal government says to the 13,000 disabled people in Ontario who are receiving CPP benefits, "Here is \$150 a month." The provincial government says, "Very good, but now we, the provincial government, are going to reduce our cheques to you by \$100 a month." The Treasurer ends up with \$100 and the disabled end up with \$50 a month. It is a one-for-two program. It is \$1 for the disabled and \$2 for the Treasurer, or \$2 for the Premier, but certainly not \$2 for the Minister of Community and Social Services. If they had given it to him, he may have given it back to the disabled, but they would not.

The Treasurer and the minister want to go on and say they provided \$54 million in assistance to the disabled. They have not. They have provided \$15 million in assistance. The federal government has provided, through the adjustments, half of the cost of the adjustments, which amounts to about \$23 million or \$24 million and, of course, the provincial government has another sum of money because it has taken \$100 a month from each and every one of 13,000 disabled people in Ontario.

These people are living on just over \$7,000 a year. This government will not allow them to improve their circumstance by \$1,200 a year. That is a big increase for those people. It takes the money. The Treasurer has taken \$1,200 a year from those people, who are entitled to that money, and is spending it on who knows what. Is it more civil servants? It is not spending it on the disabled. That speaks volumes about the genuine commitment of this government to the disabled

and to the people in need. Its commitment is only to the people who are swing voters in this province.

It has nothing to do with the needy, the homeless, the disabled; it has everything to do with the swing voters. What the swing voters need to move their votes, they will get. What optics they need to swing their votes to the Liberals, they will get. But if one is living on \$7,200 a year, and one is disabled, the Treasurer will take \$2, or the Premier will take \$2 and the disabled get \$1.

I hope the minister remembers that the next time he is out opening a ramp to assist the disabled in getting access to a building. I hope they remember when he is there, that every one of those disabled persons is living on \$7,200 a year. I hope they will remember that but for this government, this minister, this Treasurer and the Premier, those disabled people would be living on \$8,400 a year and not \$7,200 a year. I hope, too, they will remember that their own executive assistants are living on \$50,000 a year and the disabled on \$7,200 a year. The money was there for the executive assistants; the money was there for the trips of the member for Cochrane North around northern Ontario, the money was there for 5,000 more civil servants, \$200 million a year; and the money was there for the company represented by the husband of the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan), by Abe Schwartz, a friend of the Premier. If the money was there for their pet projects, why is the money not there for the disabled? They are living on \$7,200 a year.

I asked the Premier one day in the House whether he thought that was enough money to live on. I have the transcript from Hansard. The Premier said no, it was not. He had a chance to help with the federal money, 100 cents on the dollar, the Canada pension plan flow-through, and for 13,000 disabled people, he said: "Excuse me. I will just take away \$100 a month from each one of you."

I want to deal with the deficit. The Treasurer succeeded in his attempt to convince the media and the public that he had cut the deficit. I want to refer to his own document once again. I want to get the right page, because it is not in the front end of the document where the Treasurer argues his case. It is in the back, of course, where the facts pop out. I think in this copy, he removed my—

Mr. Davis: It has been edited.

Mr. Grossman: Yes, he edited this one. Here we have it.

In the budget, he recites the total spending by ministry. The total is not \$34.846 billion, as he reports in the budget. It is instead \$35.196 billion. The Treasurer will agree that when you simply do straight addition of the amounts given to each ministry in this budget, it does not total \$34.846 billion, but \$35.196 billion. That level of expenditure taken against the revenue forecast leaves him with a budgetary deficit of approximately \$1.33 billion, higher than last year.

What happens is that the Treasurer then says: "I will allow all these ministers to go out and announce \$35.1 billion worth of programs. I will allow them to make those announcements. We will write all the election speeches saying all these ministries have more money, and then after the election or somewhere down the fiscal year, I will take away \$350 million." My simple point to the Treasurer is that he should not say today he has increased all these ministries and decreased the deficit. He cannot do both.

If he decides later in the year to reduce these ministries, then he can stand up and say to the House, the media and the world that the Treasurer or the government has decided to replace increased funding for the ministries with a lower deficit, but he cannot have both today. If he makes that decision later on in the year, fine, but he cannot make the decision today that he is going to announce both the spending increases and a lower deficit. The Treasurer knows that.

Further—we discussed this earlier—if he decides to preflow the money to the school boards so that they get as much money as they got last year, then the deficit increases, because he has to find another \$330 million. If he gives the doctors anything over the inflation rate in the negotiations, he will have to find another \$50 million. The facade that on this revenue projection he is going to have a decreased deficit is, with respect, a total charade.

On the numbers offered in his budget, he has a deficit increase. To have a deficit increase in the midst of this prosperity, when he has collected 60 per cent more in income tax than the previous government, \$8 billion more in revenue than the previous government, to come in with a deficit that, let us be clear, is one third of \$1 billion lower than what he found, is patently dangerous. It is not worrisome; it is dangerous. It is precisely the kind of economics we saw in Ottawa from 1968 to 1984 and it is patently not the tradition in this province. A \$300-million deficit reduction last year and a deficit increase this year; those are the budget figures.

1710

I was reflecting upon last year's budget. The Treasurer said, "I am not hiding money in a sock at home." He called it voodoo economics when this party predicted last year that the government, in last year's budget, was hiding \$800 million. Lo and behold, the Treasurer reported yesterday that in fact the government was hiding \$1.2 billion. We underestimated the degree to which the Treasurer was, shall we say, underestimating the flow of money into government so he could sneak it out in mid-year without having to account for it in his budget.

I thought to myself, he has \$1.2 billion extra and he sends up the Minister of Community and Social Services to say they did not have enough money to pass on to the disabled. They did not have enough money. They had \$1.2 billion more than last year's budget said they needed, and what did they do? They said to the disabled, "We will take \$100 a month from you." They had \$1.2 billion extra last year and they could not help the disabled.

I was thinking about that too when I read the budget and found they had underspent \$98 million in the high-technology fund. Surely there were things to do with that money. If they could not spend it on high technology—one wonders why in a province like Ontario in 1987 they cannot find more than \$2-million worth of investments in high technology—could this government not have taken the \$98 million from the high-technology fund that it did not spend and have given it to the disabled? When the Treasurer allocates \$100 million to high technology, spends \$2 million and has \$98 million left over, is it unfair for us to ask that instead of squandering it, he move it from the unspent high-technology fund and send \$100 a month to the disabled? Is it unrealistic to take the \$98 million out of the high-technology fund that he did not spend and provide some low-cost housing units, which his minister has not done? Is that an unreal expectation?

The people of Ontario are entitled to ask: "You had \$98 million unspent in the high-technology fund. Why did you not just move it over to known technology in the schools and put a computer in every classroom in the land?" We would have applauded that. We would have said that was a valuable high-technology investment, computers for our children. For \$98 million, that program could have been dramatically accelerated. But no, the government did not do it.

This budget, on day care—let me get the amount. The members should think of this: On

child care, this government boasted yesterday that it provided an additional \$26 million. That is one quarter of the unspent money in the high-technology fund. The Treasurer should not come to this House and tell us he did not have the money. On the high-technology fund alone, he promised to spend \$100 million, spent \$2 million and had \$98 million left over. Why was the Minister of Community and Social Services not in the door to the Treasurer saying: "Treasurer, you are not able to spend \$98 million on high technology. Give me one quarter of it and we will double what you propose to give us for an increase in child care this year."?

Let us look at the total. The total commitment to child care by this province is \$185 million. The high-technology fund left unspent almost \$100 million. Is it unfair of the people of this province to ask, "Why did you not move the high-tech fund over to provide almost a 50 per cent increase in child care spaces?" Is that an unfair request? Is it unfair for the people who are living on the streets in downtown Toronto to say, "The \$100 million unspent on high technology could have bought a bed and shelter for every person living on the streets in downtown Toronto"? Is it unfair for the families needing child care to say, "You could have had a 50 per cent increase, four times greater than the increase given this year, if you just moved that money over to child care"?

Mrs. Marland: Maybe we could have had a hospital in Barrie.

Mr. Grossman: My colleague the very sensitive and sensible member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) asks about the hospital in Barrie, the Royal Victoria Hospital. The Treasurer knows you do not flow the funds the year you announce it; that is why he is going to announce it. Surely with \$100 million unspent, they could have given it to Allan Dyer's puppet over here to send him to Barrie, not to send a letter that says: "Sorry. I am going to announce it later or when it is more politically convenient for me." He could actually have gone up and announced the hospital would proceed today.

I want to predict for the Minister of Health, or should I call him the Deputy Minister of Health, who has joined us that he will announce it when the political agenda requires. The minister will announce it when another person dies in the hallway at Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie. The minister used to be the witness for the defence. With that letter, he became the witness for the prosecution. There is no question about it. He undressed himself to all of central Ontario. He and his staff undressed themselves.

Let us not cry poverty. The minister could have doubled his annual capital program for hospitals if he had had any clout with the Treasurer and had gone over to him and said: "Give me the high-tech fund that you are not going to spend. I can spend it more valuably on hospitals than on more civil servants." But the Minister of Health opted, let us be clear, for more civil servants instead of more hospital beds. He had his choice. He flopped. He gave it up. He abandoned it.

Hon. Mr. Elston: You do not even know what you are saying and you do not believe it. You obviously do not believe it.

Mr. Grossman: Yes. I want to say this to the Minister of Health: If he can find the health groups across Ontario, I will be happy to engage him in any debate, discussion, speech, test of principles, test of fortitude or test of delivery in front of any health care group in Ontario, between that Minister of Health and this minister during 1982-83. I would be happy to meet him on any ground. When he has established any record in mental health, the minister should give us a call. When he has established any record in community health centres, he should give us a call. When he has established any record in consultation and action with groups, he should give us a call. He would have nothing on the record.

The one accomplishment he has had is that he is the single minister ever to have been held up by the Ontario Medical Association as lacking in power, clout, credibility or authority in the government. That is why this Premier is waiting for the day he can move the minister to Education and move the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), heaven help us, into health care. I say to the minister not to lecture me on health care policy in Ontario. That young man has not earned his spurs and has not come close to trying to earn his spurs.

He should go and ask the mental health groups, any health groups he wants, whether he has come anywhere close to living up to his speeches or his early commitments. Where are the reforms? Where are they? Where is it in the budget? Let us see. The Minister of Health has joined us. He seemingly wants to engage in a discussion on health care. While we sit here, I presume he and his officials are out meeting with the OMA to negotiate money that he has not been given by the Treasurer in the budget tabled yesterday.

Let us see what it says about health care. A \$35 billion budget and here is what it says, "We are also aware of the greatest challenge in managing Ontario's health care system: to maintain quality in the face of rising demand while at the same time holding costs within affordable limits." Is that a breakthrough? Is that pioneering? This is the challenge. After two years, the minister has figured out that the challenge is to maintain quality within affordable limits.

Here it is: "Two major studies of the future of our health care system are under way: the Ontario Health Review Panel, chaired by"—former Liberal candidate—"Dr. John Evans, and the panel on health goals for Ontario, chaired by Dr. Robert Spasoff. The government is confident that their reports will recommend fresh responses to this challenge." Two years in office and all the minister has to show are two studies and alienated doctors and pharmacists. That is the heritage he leaves.

"We are also committed to maintaining and enhancing institutional services." Now that is just what the world is crying for, "committed to maintaining and enhancing institutional services."

Let us be clear. Unlike any other minister in any province since medicare came in, he had the chance this year, because he had the money, to make some major breakthroughs in a variety of areas and he did not do so. I say to the minister that I know of the anticipation with which the mental health groups and the Supportive Housing Coalition and the other housing groups waited for his speech of a couple of weeks ago. I know that group because I put them on the map in large part. I know their anger was boiling over when the minister came and left with nothing.

That is the way it is in his ministry. Early on in his time, he chose to sacrifice all the great, important reforms in the health care system, to give away his opportunity to transform the health care system which was ready for it and needed it. He traded that away for a political fight with the doctors of Ontario. That is his heritage. Nothing he will do will ever change that record.

I say to the House, I say to the members present and I say to the public about the budget document yesterday as a whole that a missed opportunity in politics is not just a missed opportunity for a minister of finance, whoever he might be, is not just a missed opportunity for the political masters of the day and is not just a missed opportunity for the particular Premier or government or political party; it is a missed opportunity for the people of this province.

This legislature and the government that currently serves Ontario has the fundamental duty to seize opportunities for the people of Ontario now, for their future. An opportunity missed in that context is an opportunity ripped away from every man, woman and child in this province. It is \$100 a month ripped away from every disabled person in this province.

There was an opportunity to stop shopping with our children's credit cards. This government said, "No, no." They are addicted to shopping with their children's credit cards. There was an opportunity to reduce the debt in this province, a debt young Ontarians will be carrying through no fault of their own. That opportunity was missed.

The Treasurer blithely said on the radio this morning, when I was on with him, that he thinks it is fair and equitable for us to leave a debt to our children because after all they are the ones who will be using the schools, the hospitals and the universities. He said: "So why not leave them a big debt? It is only fair." I say to the Treasurer that governments are already leaving them \$30 billion worth of debt and are already leaving them almost \$3.5 billion a year in interest. How much more does he want to burden them with? When does he draw the line? If it is not when he has an extra \$8 billion in hand, when is it?

Is it going to be during the recession somewhere down the road when our overcapacity in autos catches up with us, when the American demand for our autos dries up and when financial services are not producing the boom they currently are producing in Toronto? What will his capacity be then?

When is he going to cut the deficit? What is he going to do then? It is going to be skyrocketing. His flexibility will be gone and everyone is going to turn around and say, "Where did those \$8 billion go when we had them?" The answer will be: 5,000 civil servants, an attempt at high-technology, Exploracom and very little else to show.

There was an opportunity this time, a window in time, to look at the tax burden—almost 50 per cent of the income of every single taxpayer in Ontario—that every family in Ontario faces and say, "Let us allow that person, let us better equip that person to deal with his own work place, his own investments, his own family circumstance, his own social responsibilities by giving some money back." What did the government choose to do? To increase the deficit and not to decrease taxes. The opportunity was missed.

There was an opportunity to invest in education. Indeed, when I read all the education stories in the announcement vehicle for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter), I presumed we were in for major investments in education. Candidly, that would have been a political problem for us but it would have been a welcome addition in terms of the Ontario educational scene. We looked at it. We said: "Here it comes. Mr. Nixon is going to use his tremendous financial flexibility to increase funding for our school system, to get rid of every portable, to bring the funding of education back up from 44 per cent"—a 10 per cent reduction from where they inherited it—"and to really change the landscape in education." What did we get? A missed opportunity.

This was the single chance the Premier and the minister had to become national leaders in education by saying: "We have this flexibility and we are not going to squander it today. We are not going to squander it, as impulse shoppers, to the latest special interest group that needs to be bought off or to the latest headline. Instead, we are going to look at those young people in our province and invest it there."

I know the minister will be long gone from politics in 10 years, when those kids graduate. I know that when those kids could have high-technology jobs, when they could have made the economic transition, when the employment rate could then be down to four or five per cent, no one will point back to the current government or any current politician and say it was their responsibility. It is far more indirect than that, but that is what they are elected to do.

This is a government that is mesmerized as to whether to call an election last week or next Monday or in September, October or November. If we could get it focused on doing the job it was put in office to do and governing, instead of seeking to get another chance to govern, perhaps our children and our education system could get the attention they deserve.

It had a chance to look at the freer trade discussion, to look at our tax levels, to look at our training needs, to look at the financial institutions' growth, to look at the transition in autos we are going through once again and to see the transition from heavy labour to a technology world. It had a chance to look at all those and say: "Here, in 1987, we have the financial capacity to make the transition. We have the tools and the resources now in 1987 to mount an adjustment program for freer trade. We have the resources and capacity, here in 1987, to do what Ken

Dryden told us to do; that is, to keep our young people being educated and trained at least until age 18."

It had the flexibility to make sure women could get into the work force with meaningful child care programs. It had the opportunity to mount a massive new apprenticeship program, to reinforce our community college system, to upgrade our universities significantly, to put computers in every classroom and to take a whole generation of young people, older laid-off workers, everyone in the work force and say, "Let us now take our \$8 billion and begin to restructure for a new tomorrow, for a different future."

1730

What did it do? It opted for northern advisory councils. It opted for more civil servants, 5,000 more bureaucrats. It opted, instead, for squandering this opportunity. We will never be able to truly measure the damage wrought by the budget yesterday because we only have that opportunity once. The unemployed people in 1989 and 1990, the young people who will graduate without a good enough education from grades 12 and 13, community colleges and universities and those unemployed people who thought they had a future will not know about the opportunity missed in 1987. That is when it was missed; it was missed yesterday.

They will not realize that this Treasurer had the money to do it, but he lacked the political courage to do it. They will not know that the Premier was good at writing the speeches and had pretty Cupid lips, I read, but he had nothing when it came to having the political resolve to knuckle down and do the job.

They will know that he was at every black-tie opening in the province but at no plant closings. They will know that he presided over lots of black-tie galas and even more plant shutdowns. They will know that the economic transition occurred while he was out there making the speeches and while he was busy sliding down the slide at Ontario Place.

The heritage this Premier will leave is a heritage of glitz and glamour and lack of training, lack of jobs and lack of economic future for our young people. The opportunity was there and it was missed. It was kissed away while this Premier worried about his puff articles in the magazines, getting his picture around the province and, yes, sending the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) around to every college to announce another \$1 million.

That is their program. It is not an economic program. It is a political program. It has nothing

to do with jobs for young people. It has nothing to do with jobs for northerners. It has to do with cars and drivers and jobs for Liberal candidates, Liberal back-benchers and Liberal cabinet ministers. It has more to do with jobs for Don Smith and his employees than it has to do with the Goodyear workers and the pulp and paper workers in northern Ontario, whose jobs were blithely waved goodbye with a letter from the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources saying: "Put on the tariff. We do not care." That is the heritage. The picture we will remember and the picture the people in the north will remember is the picture of the Premier standing up and saying to the federal government, "We think you should fight the softwood lumber tariff," while the deputy minister was sending a letter saying, "Put in the softwood lumber tariff."

The cosmetics and the optics are robbing us of our future. The concentration on Toronto Life, on Saturday Night and on getting the puff pieces is costing the jobs that our young people need. It is costing us an opportunity to train our people.

The government should focus these dollars. They are being robbed from our children. They are being squandered today instead of being invested for tomorrow. My plea to the government is not to squander today's money; it is giving away tomorrow's jobs. It is not to squander today's opportunity; that is ruining our future for tomorrow. It is not to squander the dollars taken from our people; invest them back in the people who gave the government those dollars. It is not to squander this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change our economic base, to change our industrial base, to build a new infrastructure and to do the transition to freer trade. It is not to squander this opportunity, for in squandering today we give away tomorrow. We create today, tomorrow's unemployment.

This budget confirms the government's view that a fat-cat economy requires a fat-cat approach to fiscal and economic planning. The members of the government simply confirm that. They have confirmed that at the core of their being they are fat and complacent.

Whatever the winds of reform that were blowing prior to May 2, 1985, or June 2, 1985, those winds are gone. For sailors, this government is in irons and that is where it lies. There is not the slightest disturbance on the top of the lake. It is all quiet out there, all serene, all tranquil, so long as the puff pieces are written, so long as he has the government plane, so long as he can cut the red ribbons and attend the black-tie openings, everything must be okay in Ontario.

As long as this government's priority is for the Premier to be at the announcement of the name for the domed stadium instead of standing up in this House to deal with northern economic tragedy, the northern economic tragedy will continue.

We have a Premier who knew two weeks ago that if he went to the CN Tower to announce the name for the dome being built by the president of the Liberal Party of Ontario, that would get him on the front page of the newspapers and mean more to him politically than coming to this House to face some tough questions about northern layoffs, northern job losses and the economic tragedy that continues in northern Ontario.

When those priorities are reversed, then we will have a government in Ontario. When we have a Premier who says "That would be a good photo op, but I have a responsibility at 1:30 in the Legislature of Ontario, so change the time of the opening or do it without me" then we will have a government in Ontario. When we have a government in Ontario that is more interested in giving money to the disabled than to civil servants, then we will have a government in Ontario. When we have a government in Ontario that has figured out how to give out money to promote high technology in this province when the money is not requested by the spouse of the member for Oriole, then we will have a government in Ontario.

Until that time, all is tranquil. It is all serene. Nothing happens. They sail through a fat-cat economy like the fat cats they have become. We will get a chance to tell the public, the voters, a different view, to offer them an alternative, to talk about a low deficit, low tax and a booming entrepreneurial society out there; one where the transition to freer trade is a reality; one where we are helping the losers and letting the winners on freer trade grow and expand and create the jobs for those young people; one where our education system is reformed with the money available; one where child care is a reality, not a speech; and one where the government thinks that planning for the economy is more important than planning a photo op.

The party I lead simply has a different view of the responsibility of government. We have a view that says what really matters is not how well one can squander today's opportunity. What really matters is not how well one can find excuses to spend all the money that has come in today. Our party's view is that what happens and what matters in government is how well we plan for tomorrow. What really matters today is how

we strengthen the industrial base, the jobs, how we get the new investment, where the growth opportunities are going to come from and how we improve the quality of life for tomorrow. That is what matters.

What matters during times of prosperity is how one plans so that one can cope with the times when the prosperity is not there. It is not how well one can handle the prosperity; it is how well one shapes the prosperity for the recession to come. The challenge for government is not to manage through prosperity; it is, instead, to use that prosperity for the times when we are not so prosperous. It is how to invest; not to spend.

What really matters, I suppose, is the value system one brings into government. If it is a value system that is shaped by puff pieces, by newspaper articles and by magazine covers, that is the value system. If the value system is reflected—and I say this to my friends in the New Democratic Party—in a Premier who will sign anything to get into office and then forget about it when he gets there, then that is the value system.

If the value system is one that says "We really do want to serve; we want to get into government to have the opportunity to change things in Ontario," then one has a government that cares. If the value system is one that focuses on announcements not followed through, one that focuses on attending the domed stadium announcement and not question period, one that buys off the north with civil service jobs and sells it off with softwood lumber tariffs and one that says the speeches, the fanfare and the photo ops are more important than the jobs and the economic future, then that is the value system. That is their value system. It is not our value system.

1740

We are now convinced that the Liberal Party led by the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson) wanted power for power. They wanted power for photo ops and cars. They wanted power for black-tie openings. They did not want power in order to change the shape of our education system or our economy. They wanted power for power for power for power. Sooner or later, that catches up to every government.

Because of the degree of squandering they have been into and because of the size of this missed opportunity, they will pay for that. Their day of reckoning will come a lot sooner than they believe it will and sooner than it usually does.

They have said in their speech from the throne the government that governs best is the government that touches the most people. We differ on

this side. We believe the government that governs best is the one that maximizes the freedom of individuals to build their own lives, to shape their own futures, to tend to their own families and to reach for achievement and excellence.

We believe the government that governs best is the government that has the courage to care. The government that governs best is the government that comes to the House and does not give bureaucratic reasons that the disabled cannot get \$100 a month. It has the courage to care about the disabled and seizes the opportunity to say: "This is the time when the disabled people of Ontario have a chance to catch up. This is the time when the disabled people will have an opportunity not to have tokenism but to have the money that they need to build their own lives, to establish themselves, to look after themselves and not to be punished for being disabled but to get the resources they need to live full, complete and independent lives."

This was the opportunity. That would have been a government with courage. That would have been a government that desires to change things. I am beginning to believe that, last time, we got the vision of change with no change. Things are not different in Ontario today.

It would have been good if they had spent for the people in the north or for the disabled, as much as they spent on rewiring the Legislature. That would have been a nice little gesture. The things that have changed are the things that have changed to make the Liberal Party's life and, candidly, our lives here easier, but not for the disabled, not for the unemployed steelworkers in Sault Ste. Marie and not for the laid-off pulp and paper workers all across the north. I suppose their lives have changed; they have changed for the worse.

A government that puts the future ahead of wallowing in the present, a government that understands that prosperity must be earned and not simply prayed for, a government that understands that prosperity is not to be squandered but is to be used to ensure future prosperity, that is a government that has the courage to care. That is the kind of government that has the courage to put the future first and not re-election first. In their case, it is election and not re-election.

Of the 13 people here—seven government members—I could put together a better cabinet from these 13 than the Treasurer could put together out of any 13 he puts up over there today or after the election.

In the context of the regard that the Treasurer has always had for the Legislative Assembly and the parliament of Ontario—I am winding up my address on the budget—this is the third time I have had a chance to address a budget introduced by this government and the second time as leader. I have spoken now three times on speeches from the throne offered by that government. The leader of the third party has done the same over the last couple of years. I guess that totals eight, 10 or 12 opportunities for the leaders of the opposition parties to address the major government documents of the year. As I recall, the Premier has not attended any of these speeches.

As the Treasurer knows, sitting through the addresses of the other parties as leader is not always the most easy or pleasant job one has. In the political atmosphere in this House, it obviously irritates sometimes. Sometimes rhetoric goes a little further than it ought to. It is only an opportunity for one to sit and take blows without responding. It is not a comfortable time, but it is part of leadership.

We are used to hearing the Premier say he is uncomfortable with certain things. He was uncomfortable having to deal with conflict of interest. He wished he did not have to deal with it, but that comes with the territory. If he was not prepared to take the tough decisions to put ministers who had broken the conflict-of-interest guidelines out of cabinet, he should not have offered himself as Premier.

I know it is uncomfortable. It is not good enough to go in front of the microphones and say: "Listen, I find this uncomfortable. I am going to find someone else to do it. Let us call John Aird. Let us appoint a commissioner." It is uncomfortable and it is one of the tough tests a leader has to go through, but being Premier is not all fun and games. It is not all slides at Ontario Place, black-tie galas, Hollywood galas. It is not simply getting the opportunity to greet Mr. Mitterrand or invite Desmond Tutu here. It is not that.

The real test of a Premier is the uncomfortable things. Anyone can do the ceremonial things; it takes no talent and no ingenuity. But we find time and again in this House, when the Premier is expected to be here to answer the tough questions, he is at the announcement of the name for the domed stadium. We find time and again, when there is a tough question for the Premier, he throws it off to his colleagues, the other ministers. He does not answer. The easy questions he takes.

When it is time to sit here and have his performance scrutinized by the leaders of the

other parties, we find the Premier has somewhere else to go. I want only to say to the person who talks about how much he loves this assembly, that is, the Treasurer and government House leader—and I know he does—that I personally have been somewhat offended at the reality that the leader of the government does not have the time to attend this House for the major windup addresses on the budget or the throne speech by the opposition parties, the New Democrats and the Conservatives.

I sat here last Tuesday, two days ago, and I want to tell the Treasurer I had to listen to what I considered to be one of the most disgusting and trite offerings ever put up by a spokesman winding up a throne speech in my 12 years here.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: We will have an opportunity to respond to that sort of—I think it is simple political immaturity on behalf of the minister. None the less, I did not walk out and the third party did not walk out. We sat here and took it out of respect. Not out of respect for the minister; he traded off a lot of the respect in this House last Tuesday afternoon. It was not out of respect for the minister; it was not out of respect for what he was saying. What he was saying had no call upon respect. As uncomfortable as it was, we stayed here out of respect for the system.

I would have thought that just out of respect for the system, not out of respect for me, the member for York South (Mr. Rae) or any spokesman for the opposition—let me invite the Treasurer to take back the message. These speeches are what they are. We all know what they are. They are something that the parliamentary traditions around here used to require that the leaders of the parties attend and listen to out of respect for the system.

My colleague the leader of the New Democratic Party had to leave for a time this afternoon. He was kind enough to come over and say to me that he had to leave and that if he had an opportunity to get back, he would be back. I suspect the leader of the New Democratic Party has not particularly enjoyed the last 40 minutes he has been here.

1750

An hon. member: I think he is sound asleep.

Mr. Grossman: He is not asleep. He is far more polite than to do that. He may not have endorsed any or all of what I said, he may disagree with all of it, but he was polite enough, out of respect for the system, to be here.

I say to the Premier, wherever he is, at whatever black-tie event, at whatever magazine interview, at whatever photo opportunity, his job is to be here. The Premier does not have to agree with us; he just has to be courteous to the system and be here.

In closing, might I say only that this budget demonstrates the lack of commitment I have spoken about. It demonstrates a lack of political courage. It demonstrates a lack of foresight. It demonstrates a lack of will to cut the deficit. It demonstrates a lack of prudence, a lack of conscience, a lack of a sense of, "This is why we wanted the job." It lacks a sense of desire; it lacks foresight; it lacks the sense of a will to govern; it lacks a message. It says that this government, after two years, has settled in to day-by-day, lavish squandering of this opportunity.

It says they are there to play games about elections but to do nothing serious about our economic future. It is a budget which demonstrates better than anything we could have that its future budgets mean nothing. It is a budget which demonstrates that the community economic transformation agreement of two years ago is not fulfilled; that the northern development fund of two years ago was not spent; that the Futures program turned out to be billboards, not jobs; that the 230,000 people who were promised jobs from Futures turned into 50,000.

It demonstrates that the skills fund was not meant to be spent. It demonstrates that the centrepieces of their budgets are centrepieces for headlines, not action. It demonstrates that \$100 million a year set aside for high technology turned into \$2 million. It demonstrates that politics, headlines and pictures are everything and that delivery, progress, planning and investment are nothing. It indicates a political agenda, not an economic agenda.

I said at the top of my remarks that I was going to treat this speech as an economic document, which it is not, not a political document, which it is. I regret that this is not an economic document. It will help us politically immeasurably. Yesterday in the Tory lockup there was a huge sigh of relief. Sadness at the missed opportunity; sadness that the education system was left behind; sadness in terms of the north, child care, families; sadness and anger over the disabled ripoff; sadness, over all that, that this opportunity, the May 29, 1987, opportunity was so squandered by this government.

I want to read one sentence from the throne speech delivered on April 28, about three weeks ago. "An investment in our schools is an

investment in the future of our communities." I agree with that, and this government chose this year to decrease the investment in those schools. It chose to decrease the investment in young people. It chose to back off a commitment to excellence in education. It chose to back off major reform of our educational system. It chose to back off reforming our economic structures. It chose to back off day care. It chose to back off social programs in a wide variety of areas. It chose to take money from the disabled. It chose to trivialize the north, ignore the east and wallow in today's riches.

A government that will so squander the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity presented by the 19 tax increases implemented by this government is a government that has squandered not only our economic future but also its own political future. They had their chance; they have squandered it. They have had their chance to change directions, to tell the public why they wanted office, and they have decided not to do so, or they have shown the public that they wanted it for power, not for people. They wanted it for the perks of office, not for the people they are there to serve.

Because of this massively squandered opportunity for the thousands of young people whose future employment is threatened by this government, for the people who were left behind when there was \$8 billion to help them, for the incredible deficit that our young people will live with through the rest of their lives in Ontario, for a budget which purports to cut the deficit but increases the deficit, for a budget which failed to seize the opportunity to make massive changes in the one chance the government will ever have in Ontario to make those changes, for squandering those opportunities, we in this party will proudly stand in November or December to vote against this budget. We will stand to campaign against this budget if the needless opportunity is presented to us.

We will come forward with policy options, a financial management program and a plan for the future that deals with people, not politics; gives the money to the disabled; cuts deficits and allows people, not ministers' egos, to grow. For all those reasons, we will stand on behalf of the people of this province, the forgotten people of this province, the people who do not work for Ellis-Don or the Liberal Party of Ontario, the people who do not have access, the people who have not had a chance to be heard by this government, the people who have been left behind with the vacuous promises of its early

speeches and its campaign promises. We will stand up in this party for those people and say categorically, unequivocally, "No" to this squandered opportunity.

On motion by Mr. McClellan, the debate was adjourned.

ROYAL ASSENT

The Deputy Speaker: I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his chambers.

Clerk of the House: The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour has assented:

Bill 6, An Act to amend the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk Act.

Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act.

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1983.

The Deputy Speaker: The government House leader has the business for next week.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, thank you for reminding me. I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, May 25, the New Democratic Party's response to the budget will be presented, followed by a general debate on the budget.

On Tuesday, May 26, there will be a debate on the principles of the Meech Lake accord, set out in sessional paper 35 tabled by the Premier on May 4, by my insistence.

On Wednesday, May 27, we will conclude the debate on the interim supply motion, followed by, if it is concluded, the budget debate.

On Thursday, May 28, in the morning, we will consider private members' ballot items standing in the names of Mrs. Marland and Mr. McCaffrey. In the afternoon, we will deal with the third readings of Bill 116, loan and trust, followed by, if time is available, committee of the whole House on Bill 34, freedom of information, second reading of Bill 23, conflict of interest, and Bill 55, teachers' superannuation, and third reading of Bill 154, pay equity.

There may be a change in the order of Thursday's business, following further consultation among the House leaders.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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No. 15

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, May 25, 1987



Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, May 25, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RICK HANSEN

Mr. Shymko: On November 6, 1986, this Legislative Assembly was privileged to welcome in our chamber Rick Hansen, a young man whose heroic campaign to help the physically handicapped has come to symbolize the best in humanity. We honoured him then by naming an Ontario township in his name.

I speak on behalf of all honourable colleagues as we join with millions of Canadians in paying tribute to Rick Hansen's completion on Saturday, May 23, of his international wheelchair odyssey.

After two years, two months and 40,000 kilometres through 34 countries, Rick Hansen has broken the insurmountable obstacles of time and distance to eliminate once and for all the term "disabled" from our vocabulary. By comparison with him and with those members of our society who are physically challenged every day of their lives, it is we more often than not who are the truly disabled and the handicapped.

Rick Hansen's message to all of us, including politicians, is to challenge our fear of failure and to take up the courage to face seemingly insurmountable obstacles so that dreams can indeed come true. All of us, on whatever side of our House, must address the plight of those men and women who, on a daily basis, face the challenges beyond certain obstacles that some of us cannot even imagine. Rick Hansen's strength has given them faith. His example has restored faith in conquering obstacles of time and distance.

CYCLING

Mrs. Grier: As a cyclist, I have always felt myself to be a second-class citizen on Ontario's roads and streets; as a pedestrian, I am offended by the careless disregard that other cyclists have for my safety; and as a politician, I have been inundated with complaints from pedestrians about dangerous cyclists on the sidewalks and

with complaints from the local police at their frustration in attempting to control cyclists.

The sidewalks in our towns and cities belong to pedestrians and only pedestrians. The roads belong equally to motorists and bicyclists. Today I will be introducing a private members' bill that will make our roads and sidewalks safer for all. My bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to require that when asked to do so by a police officer, a cyclist must produce some sort of identification, even simply his or her correct name or address. Under the present act, unless the cyclist chooses to produce identification, police are helpless when cyclists ride on sidewalks, ignore stop signs or go through red lights.

Cycling deserves our support and promotion. Cycling reduces traffic congestion, is pollution-free and increases physical fitness, but in the interests of safety, cycling must be done according to the Highway Traffic Act.

The amendments I am proposing today are ones that have been long sought by groups concerned with pedestrian safety and by cycling proponents such as the Ontario Cycling Association and the city of Toronto cycling committee. I urge the government to support my bill and to ensure that it is dealt with quickly.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Brandt: On April 22, 1986, the government announced with a great deal of fanfare the formation of the Premier's Council. To quote from the press release at that particular time, the council was to steer Ontario into the forefront of economic leadership and technological innovation, very high-sounding words.

Ostensibly, this council and the high technology fund were to close the gap with an infusion of some \$1-billion in funds, as the minister is well aware. Behind the headlines we have the truth. Some \$2 million has been spent to date on high-technology activities. To put it into context, that is about one per cent of the amount that the government has spent on the estimated 4,000 new civil servants who have been hired over the course of the past two years. Those 4,000 civil servants will not close the technological gap to help Ontario to become more competitive with

the Japanese, the West Germans or our United States trading partners.

I hope the government enjoyed the headlines it received while it got them, because flashy, slick press announcements will do nothing to improve Ontario's competitiveness.

The government's \$1-billion high technology fund to date is nothing more than a \$1-billion bust. The jobs for Ontario's future are dependent upon the activities that are necessary in that area, and I would urge the government to get on with the job it has talked about and done nothing about.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Warner: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you, like I, will find it totally bizarre to think that this government allows insurance companies to find people guilty, not by reason of their driving records but by association.

A young woman aged 24 and single is given a rate of approximately \$800 per year for her insurance. A week later she turns 25 and gets married, and lo and behold, the rate now will be \$2,300. Why? Not because of her driving record, which happens to be clean, but because her husband has a driving record that is blemished; therefore, she must pay for his poor driving. That is absolutely astounding.

What really galls me and many motorists, of course, is that this patently unfair condition is supported by the government. This minister cannot provide justice for that woman, who is now considering annulling the marriage because she needs the insurance in order to drive her car and continue working. This government is contributing to marital breakdowns.

1340

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Jackson: Last week, the people of Ontario were promised some \$375 million as this government's response to its own admission of a housing crisis. We can only hope this year's commitment to do something with these announcements is more substantial than it was in the last year, when the minister only spent 80 per cent of what he had announced, or in the year before, when only 90 per cent of his announcements were acted upon.

Given the record, given the \$92 million that has been lifted from the Ministry of Housing's budgets in two years, and given that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is only going to meet his deficit reduction targets by lifting even more money from budgets that are already announced,

it is obvious where a good portion of this money the Treasurer wants is going to come from. It will come from a ministry that is only good at making announcements. It will come from a ministry that rejected every single application from Burlington last year, when the city had a vacancy rate of zero and the minister had close to \$70 million left over in his budget. It will come from a ministry that promised 5,000 Renterprise units back in 1985, but has seen only 1,483 of those units built. It will come from a ministry that has announced Project 3000 twice, and in the six months has allocated less than a third of the units and built none.

We have a crisis because this minister and this government only understand the value of an announcement and not the value of actually providing shelter. How else does one explain a ministry that will increase its staff by nearly 200 civil servants at a cost that would have provided 200 new rental units in Ontario?

CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES

Mr. Warner: Last week, I raised the issue of the Centre for Labour Studies, which the board of directors at Humber College is attempting to terminate. A week has gone by and there is still no leadership from the minister. In fact, when I raised the question, members will recall the minister did not even know what the Centre for Labour Studies was, let alone whether he should help keep the doors open.

It is worth refreshing his memory that the Centre for Labour Studies offers a large number of valuable courses, including occupational health and safety in seven languages, antiracism programs for the work place, the largest English-as-a-second-language program in Canada and special programs for immigrant workers. More than 10,000 people have taken labour studies courses over the past 12 years.

I find it astonishing to believe that this highly successful program is being cancelled because of a funding problem, since the annual cost to Humber College is approximately \$50,000 of the college's budget of \$75 million. Perhaps the truth behind this devastating blow to organized labour is that the college does not understand or appreciate the needs and aspirations of working people. Neither, it would appear, does the Minister of Skills Development and Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara).

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. McLean: I want to bring to the attention of the Legislature the questions we have had in

Orders and Notices. I have had one for almost a year now which has not been replied to. I think it is the government's responsibility to make sure all these questions are replied to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

ACID RAIN

Hon. Mr. Bradley: On December 17, 1985, I announced our government's Countdown Acid Rain program. It is a plan to cut acid-rain-causing pollution from Ontario sources by 60 per cent by 1994. It requires the four major acid rain polluters to reduce their emissions by two thirds during this time.

With its deep cuts and prompt, staged timetable, Countdown Acid Rain is the most progressive program of its kind in North America or Europe.

I am pleased to rise today to inform the House of improvements which cabinet has made to the program, in accordance with our original commitment to seek public comment on the abatement approach.

Two weeks ago, following public hearings, the select committee on the environment released its report on acid rain in Ontario which contained a number of recommendations.

Foremost among the committee's suggestions was the elimination of the banking provision for Ontario Hydro. This provision said that, in any year that Hydro's actual emissions were less than the regulated limit, the shortfall could be banked with a portion eligible for emission in a subsequent year.

Our government agrees with the committee's suggestion. We have removed the banking provision and not replaced it with any similar clause. Like the other acid rain polluters, Ontario Hydro will simply have to do what it takes to meet the law.

The committee also suggested that the semi-annual reports on pollution abatement research and development, which Ontario Hydro has been voluntarily submitting, be expanded and made a regulatory requirement. Our government agrees with this. We have included such a reporting requirement in Ontario Hydro's acid rain regulation.

The committee made a number of other suggestions. Some of them are already being done, but the committee was possibly unaware of the activity. Some are addressed by initiatives to be made public in the near future. Others are under consideration in my ministry.

I thank the environment committee chairman, the member for Halton-Burlington (Mr. Knight),

and all the members who contributed to the committee's acid rain report.

With out Countdown Acid Rain program refined, I will take our accomplishments and our demands for reciprocal action to the United States. I will press in every way I can for the United States to adopt a similarly tough abatement program. Such action is essential to protect the environment and renewable resources of Ontario and, indeed, all of eastern North America.

I will let our neighbours know that the people and the government of Ontario will not accept research and promises and delay as a substitute for pollution abatement action.

FOREST SPRAYING PROGRAM

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I would like to inform members of the Legislature that aerial spraying against forest insect pests in Ontario resumed over the weekend.

As members may know, my ministry temporarily suspended spraying operations about 10 days ago while laboratory analysis was being performed on the province's stock of biological insecticide, bacillus thuringiensis, known as Bt. I ordered the analysis after we learned that trace levels of other bacteria had been discovered in a portion of our Bt stock.

Bt is a living culture of bacteria which is made through a fermentation process. It is not unusual to have the insecticide contain small amounts of bacteria other than Bt. Our tests confirmed that some other bacteria existed in all the Bt tested; however, it was not hazardous to health or to the environment.

The test results were reviewed with the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) and they all agreed there was no danger of adverse health or environmental impact.

The Ontario Pesticides Advisory Committee has reviewed the test results and concurred that the Bt formulations pose no risk. I have also been advised by the Department of National Health and Welfare that there are no concerns from that department in terms of adverse health effects.

Consequently, the suspension on aerial spraying was lifted on Friday. Over the weekend we sprayed almost 6,000 hectares for gypsy moth and spruce budworm. Spraying for jack pine budworm will likely begin June 1, weather permitting.

RESPONSES

ACID RAIN

Mr. Gillies: The announcement today by the Minister of the Environment regarding the Ontario Hydro banking provision, which has been raised in this House for a period of weeks now by the New Democratic Party Environment critic and myself, is an admission by the minister that the inclusion of this provision in his program was a mistake and that the environment committee and the opposition critics were right. It is not a day too soon that this absurd provision has been dropped from the acid rain program.

In congratulating the select committee on the environment, I am sure the minister was just a little forgetful in not congratulating and thanking the members of that committee who first raised the issue, my colleagues the members for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), Brock (Mr. Partington) and Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier). I am sure all members of the House would like to congratulate and thank the members who first identified this as the fatal weakness in the Countdown Acid Rain program.

1350

The minister has taken the first step in bringing Ontario Hydro into line with the provisions that apply to all the other major sources of hydrocarbon pollution in the province, but I want to say to the minister that we believe more information is required. When Ontario Hydro appeared before the select committee, it indicated that in the event the banking provision was scrapped, it did foresee four possible options for ensuring continued security of supply of energy for our province, in the event of a malfunction of equipment, that it hoped would not see an increase in hydrocarbon emission of the type that was allowed under the banking but is now not allowed.

I want to say to the minister that the people from Ontario Hydro were not forthcoming with the committee in telling it exactly what their plans were. We believe the government has an obligation to get the information from Hydro and tell this House whether the option is going to be the increased use of low-sulphur coal. Are they going to go for the scrubber option? Are they going to go for the option of bringing in out-of-province energy at such times that it is needed? We believe this is important information that Hydro should share with this House and the people of Ontario.

This announcement is welcome, albeit belated, and is perhaps a demonstration that occasionally, when politicians such as the members of the

select committee on the environment have the courage of their convictions to put forward suggestions, even Ontario Hydro can be brought to heel by a committee of this Legislature.

FOREST SPRAYING PROGRAM

Mr. Harris: I am astounded at the statement today by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio). He says he wants to inform members of the Legislature that aerial spraying has resumed. I was shocked that he never informed the Legislature that it had been stopped. He never made a statement in the Legislature over this shocking program.

We have now had two years of foul-ups, tendering malpractices, questionable tendering practices, airplanes coming in from the United States, airplanes coming in from Quebec. Ontario operators have been shocked at the tendering practices of his ministry for the second year in a row.

Mr. Speaker, while we are on this program of bacillus thuringiensis spraying, I want to tell you that in spite of the minister's stated and avowed—and I assume he speaks for the government—preference for spraying chemical all over our forests, as he has said loud and clear in every section of northern Ontario that he wanted to spray chemical, with all these foul-ups in the program, one now has to wonder whether there is a serious commitment to making Bt work, in spite of the fact that last year the decision to follow the policy we had initiated in 1985 and go with Bt and give it a chance to work was forced upon this government by the opposition parties.

One of the most successful spray programs was in 1985 when, even though the minister insisted he preferred chemical, he was forced into using Bt. There was a very successful program in 1986. Again, when we see the problems with the Bt program for 1987, when we see these kinds of foul-ups, we now have to question whether he is serious and whether the ministry is serious about the commitment to Bt spraying.

It really makes us wonder whether Captain Chemical—and I assume he speaks for the government—is serious about the commitment to the environment at the same time as the commitment to the forest.

ACID RAIN

Mrs. Grier: We certainly welcome the statement of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) with respect to the removal of

Hydro's banking privilege. When the minister first announced his Countdown Acid Rain program in December 1985, we pointed out that the provision of banking was a major loophole in the program. Gradually over the months and years, other voices were added to the cry and eventually the report of the select committee on the environment was unanimous. I am very glad indeed that the minister has listened and responded.

I note that the minister, in his statement, reiterates his commitment to seeking public comment on the abatement approach, but I regret that in his statement there is no commitment to further public scrutiny of the regulations as they are changed in the future. I remind him that this was another of the recommendations of the select committee. The select committee especially wanted an opportunity for public discussion of the abatement plans to be submitted by the major polluters at the end of 1988. In the case of Ontario Hydro, it is particularly important that the opportunity for public scrutiny be provided so we can be very sure that what we are getting from Hydro is the best available technology and not merely a substitution of nuclear power for fossil-generated power.

I am a little puzzled by the minister's statement that the committee was possibly unaware of other things the government is doing in view of the fact that we had the minister as a witness before the committee, and his staff monitored the committee all through our hearings. If we were discussing recommendations and there was action we ought to have been made aware of, I do not know why he did not tell us because we were certainly open to hearing whatever he had to say.

I think the acceptance of this committee's major recommendation is once again proof that minority government has been good for the environment of Ontario, and long may it continue.

FOREST SPRAYING PROGRAM

Mr. Wildman: I appreciate the effort of the minister to be open with the Legislature with regard to the spraying program of his ministry across the province. I point out, however, that the announcement the minister made in the House was made known through the media throughout the province over the weekend, so this is hardly new information for us in the Legislature. I hope the minister will be as forthcoming or even more forthcoming with his plans with regard to herbicide spraying across

Ontario's forests, particularly with regard to the spraying of 2,4-D in this province this year.

In response to the written question I put in Orders and Notices, the minister's staff, under the signature of the minister, provided a completely inadequate answer with regard to the places across the province where 2,4-D might be sprayed. It was simply a list of the various regions of the ministry across Ontario with the number of hectares to be sprayed in each region, which certainly does not tell us what areas specifically are to be sprayed with 2,4-D.

It is most unfortunate that, unlike the experience with *bacillus thuringiensis*, the ministry has decided to proceed with chemical herbicide spraying in Ontario despite the fact that the federal Department of National Health and Welfare is still considering the appropriateness of the approval of 2,4-D in Canada. This ministry has decided to proceed, apparently with the agreement of the Minister of the Environment, even though we do not yet have a final statement by the federal government about the safety of 2,4-D. Would that the minister would err on the side of caution in that regard as he has with regard to insecticide spraying.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Grossman: We must come back to the theme we were talking about last week, and for several months for that matter, and that is the pension money that was taken from the disabled people in this province. In that regard, I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services.

One thing that seems to have been forgotten in the discussion over the moneys the federal government sent on to the disabled people in this province is that this money was not a government grant, as is the guaranteed annual income system. It is not a welfare payment of any sort. It is a return of Canada pension plan moneys to disabled people who paid into that Canada pension plan. In other words, having looked at the pension plan, the federal government deduced that the contributions paid in by the disabled when they were working entitled them to a \$150-a-month increase in their pensions.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

1400

Mr. Grossman: Can the minister attempt to explain to this House why he and his colleagues took \$100 of the \$150 in pension money sent by

the federal government to the disabled pensioners in this province?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We did not take any of the CPP money that was forwarded to the disabled. All of that money went to the disabled.

As the Leader of the Opposition is probably aware, there are two groups of disabled people in Ontario who receive CPP funds. Some of them are those who receive sufficient CPP funds that they are not eligible for top-up money from our family benefits program. There are others who do not receive sufficient CPP funds so they do become eligible for top-up funds from our family benefits program. Regardless of which of those two groups the money went to, they kept that money. Those who are eligible for top-up funds in our family benefits program continued to get those up to an agreed-upon Gains level. Nothing has changed. They got the full \$150. The top-up money that we gave them was adjusted to the Gains level—the same for everybody.

Mr. Grossman: Surely the minister will agree that the adjustment he made in his program was to say that for 13,000 disabled people in this province, their pensions have gone up by \$150 and therefore he has decided to reduce their Gains-D—guaranteed annual income system for the disabled—cheque by \$100; thus meaning, in simple terms, that of the \$150 increase they got on the pensions they had paid into, the minister reduced their payments from this government by \$100 so they would end up \$50 a month ahead of the game.

When he has had \$8 billion to spread around this province in two years, he decided to reduce his cheques by \$100 a month. Can the minister deny that simple, clear fact?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is not as the Leader of the Opposition describes it.

Mr. Grossman: How so?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: There is an agreed Gains ceiling in this province.

Any disabled person in this province who receives from other sources, including CPP, funds below that agreed Gains ceiling, does get top-up money from the provincial government program. Whatever other resources they have are taken into consideration in determining how much provincial top-up money they get. That has not changed.

Mr. Grossman: Categorically that information is not correct. The federal government, by virtue of this letter, changed those rules totally and completely. The federal government said the \$150 a month was to be totally exempt from the

ceiling. They said that specifically so that the minister, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) could not hijack \$100 out of the \$150 a month that was intended for these disabled persons on account of an increase in their pensions, pensions that they paid into and earned—and the minister took \$100 of it.

Just to clarify this issue, could the minister agree that the letter from the federal minister exempted the total \$150 from the ceiling he just referred to? Did it or did it not?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In gross dollar terms, not net dollar terms, the amount of money that the province did not have to top up as a result of the federal initiative was about \$18 million. It was a decision of this government to take that \$18 million, multiply it by three, bring it up to a total of \$54 million—gross dollars—and allocate \$54 million to all 85,000 Gains-D recipients in this province. In other words, the federal government flowed \$18 million; the provincial government flowed \$54 million. That is a heck of a difference.

Mr. Grossman: The minister's position is that to give money to the disabled, he has to take it from other disabled. They have not got unspent money from the high-tech fund. They take money from one group of disabled and give it to another group of disabled.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat? The standing orders allow the Leader of the Opposition to ask two questions and the leader of the New Democratic Party to ask two questions. Will you place your second question?

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: My second question is to the Treasurer. Last week, in the House and in the budget, he told us he would not this year be advancing \$330 million in funding to the school boards as he did last year. Could he tell the House why he decided to change his policy and not send \$300-million advance funding to the school boards this year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member will recall that over the past seven or eight years the cushion of advanced funds available to the school boards has varied from seven per cent down to three per cent at the hands of his predecessor, and then from three per cent up to 12 per cent during the years of the Liberal administration. The requirements for the 12 per cent required the \$330 million as a one-time payment.

The member can pursue it with the officials of the Treasury if I cannot satisfy him—and I am

afraid that I cannot—when I say to him that it is a one-time payment that gives them that cushion until we remove it. I do not want to remove it, as the predecessor government did as a budgetary restraint measure back in the time of the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller), but we do feel the 12 per cent is necessary in order to assist the school boards in meeting their financial requirements early in their fiscal year.

Mr. Grossman: I come back to the initial question. We understand what the Treasurer did this year, which was to improve the cash flow and send some money in advance, for the reasons he has quite properly laid out. But in his budget of last week setting out his intentions for this current fiscal year, he said he was going to stop that policy and not send the cash advance.

The Treasurer is shaking his head. In answering this question, he might refer to page 64, table C6, where it shows “Grant Flow Improvement” for 1986-1987 as \$330 million. The “Budget Plan” for this current year is zero. My question to the Treasurer is not what happened previously; it is just to ask him why he has changed the policy to eliminate the advance flow payment for school boards this year from \$330 million down to zero, as reported in the budget.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member will notice, when he examines the table, that the grants for school boards have shown the usual advances. As a matter of fact, they are 25 per cent higher than they were during the budget immediately previous to the Liberal administration. The \$330 million is listed on a separate line as an adjunct that increases that cushion to 12 per cent. It is not payable year by year; it is simply a part of the program that provides this assistance on a continuing basis and requires no further budgetary action unless, God forbid, we decide in the future to reduce it the way the member’s people did.

Mr. Grossman: If that is the Treasurer’s position, then one must conclude by reading page 64, where he shows the total transfers to the school boards, that in 1986-1987—however the Treasurer slices it—he is sending \$3.787 billion to the school boards and this current fiscal year he is sending \$3.726 billion to the school boards, or in other words, a net reduction of \$61 million in cash flow to the school boards year over year.

Can the Treasurer deny the reality that as a result of whatever changes he wants to explain, the school boards this year will be getting a cash flow \$61 million lower than last year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I simply reiterate for the third or fourth time that the honourable member

will be aware that the increase in the general legislative grants is as I have described. The \$330 million is to provide a one-time-only cushion of 12 per cent and it will continue to be to the advantage of the school boards until we decide to remove that advantage.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for York South would like to ask a question.

Mr. Rae: I would not mind.

1410

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions. On Friday, a well-known revolutionary organization, the Toronto Taxicab Brokerages Association, which was represented by that rabid Trotskyite John Tory, said the solution to the current insurance crisis affecting cab drivers was, in fact, a public plan. With the basic rates for cab drivers in Winnipeg at \$2,005 and those in Vancouver at \$2,800, and with the Facility Association rate in Toronto now running at \$9,500 and rising up over \$10,000 and \$12,000 for many drivers, I wonder if the minister can say who is the Minister of Financial Institutions to say that John Tory and the Toronto Taxicab Brokerages Association are wrong?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: As far as John Tory is concerned, I will let my friends in the official opposition account for his statements, but as far as the taxicab drivers are concerned, that is an area we are concerned about. We announced we were going to reduce immediately their rates in the Facility Association by 10 per cent, but the leader of the third party is continuing to do what he always does, which shows he does not understand the insurance business. If you compare Manitoba or British Columbia, what you have to do—and I throw out this challenge to him again—is to have those insurance agencies quote on taxi drivers in Toronto and see what kind of rates you get.

Mr. Rae: I want to talk about some other people who do not know anything about the insurance business. The policy of a cab driver called Faiz Mohammed just came up for renewal. Last year, he paid \$3,600. His renewal this year is for \$9,700. A year ago, apparently, he had a \$400 claim. He cannot afford to pay the renewal, so he is out of business.

Lawrence Isenberg has a small fleet. Three years ago, he was able to get coverage for his cars, with collision coverage, for a per car rate of \$1,102 for six months. I am sure he does not

know anything about the insurance business either. He is just a cab driver trying to drive a cab. I am just trying to do a job too. This year, the best quote he could get was \$4,509 per car for six months.

What I want to ask the minister is, if even the people who are working in small business themselves are saying they want to get some access to justice and the way they feel most comfortable about that is getting it through public insurance, why does the minister continue to use every reactionary argument in the book against the solution that makes sense and that even the small business community itself is starting to talk about as the answer to its problem?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I have announced that we are setting up a rate review board. We are also setting up an insurance advocate. When that is in place, anyone who thinks he requires redress will be able to have it.

To address the leader of the third party's proposal, I do not know whether he is suggesting that every taxpayer in Ontario should help subsidize the taxi industry in Ontario. I do not know whether that is what he is suggesting, but if it is, why does he not say so?

Mr. Rae: I will tell the minister what I think. I think cab drivers ought to be able to get insurance for less than \$200 a week. What does the minister think? That is the question. The question is the rates.

Mr. Speaker: Minister?

Mr. Rae: Mr. Speaker, my third supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: Oh, does the member have a question?

Mr. Rae: That was just put in there for effect.

I want to ask the minister a question. With respect to the rate review board, on October 14, 1986, the minister, in answer to questions from my friend the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart), said that if we had the same kind of rate review board structure as they had in Alberta, he figured Ontario drivers would be paying—and I am quoting from Hansard—"If that plan were in effect in Ontario, during the past five years the people of Ontario would have paid from eight per cent to 39 per cent more than they pay now."

I want to ask the minister: Is that the kind of rate review structure he is talking about for Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: That is one of the reasons we are not implementing that kind of rate review board. We are going to bring in a rate review board that is truly going to be a rate review board.

All that review board does is to pass it through, and that would have cost the taxpayers of Ontario a lot of money. We are going to implement a rate review board that will be responsive; it will protect the consumers of Ontario; and when the member sees it, he will be able to support it, which I hope he will.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. It goes back to some of the questions we raised following the budget announcement about child care. We are still trying to get a handle on exactly what the government has announced, because I can tell the minister the director of his child care branch has given us different answers than he appears to have given us in the House.

Perhaps I could ask the question this way. Of the \$26 million he has announced this year as new money, how much is going to be used for capital expenditure?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Approximately \$2.5 million.

Mr. Rae: If \$2.5 million is what the minister is allocating for capital expenditure, it is perhaps worth pointing out that it costs between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to create a child care space, depending on whether construction or renovation is creating the space. The difficulty I have is trying to figure out how many new spaces the minister is in fact talking about. The minister is quoted in many newspapers as saying that Ontario needs 100,000 new day care spaces. Can he tell us how much the \$2.5 million, and the \$23.5 million in operating costs, is going to produce in terms of new spaces?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I would remind the leader of the third party that in addition to the \$26 million, there was also a budget allocation of \$33 million spread over three years, for capital allocation only. Therefore, it is assumed that \$11 million of that \$33 million will be allocated in the current fiscal year. The \$2.5 million of the \$26 million and the \$11 million of the \$33 million have to be combined to get the total capital budget.

I would also point out to the member that the figure he quotes for capital spaces is correct if we are building completely new capital spaces, and some of those will be built. But in a number of cases we will be expanding and enhancing existing capital space. In those cases, the cost for space is less. It is our hope to put in approximately 5,000 spaces over the next couple of years.

Mr. Rae: At 5,000 spaces, it will take 20 years for the government to meet its objective of 100,000 spaces. The minister said over a couple of years, so we are now talking 40 years in terms of meeting the objective of 100,000 spaces.

Recognizing that, according to the statistics, there are nearly 350,000 mothers in the labour force who have children between the ages of one month and five years, how can the minister stand in his place and say that what he is going to be doing is creating 5,000 new spaces over the next two years, when there is that level of problem, that serious a problem, and announce the really pitiful initiatives he announced in the Treasurer's budget?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I would point out to the leader of the third party that when this government took office the total allocation for day care services was \$105 million. This fiscal year it will be \$185 million. That is an \$80-million increase.

The second point I would make to the leader of the third party is that what was announced in this budget was clearly identified as the first stage and interim dollars. The statement I will be making to the House shortly will indicate the allocations for the next three years, which the member will see will be much more extensive than what has been announced so far.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Premier about the growth in the size of government bureaucracy since he took over two years ago.

Last week we asked if the government could explain the growth of its bureaucracy in two years by 4,700 civil servants, at an additional cost to the taxpayers of \$200 million. This reflects only part of the overall situation.

Is the Premier aware that, on top of those increases in bureaucracy, in the last two years the staff complement at Ontario Hydro has grown by 1,239 people and that the staff complement at the Workers' Compensation Board has increased by 568 people, for a further additional cost to the taxpayers of \$75 million for salaries alone?

At a time when other funds are being constrained, how can the Premier justify a total growth in his government's bureaucracy of 6,500 people and \$275 million?

1420

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The increases the honourable member is referring to were referred to in the budget as far as the Ontario public service is concerned. He and his colleagues have asked us

about that and I have responded on a number of occasions.

As far as the increase in complement at Ontario Hydro is concerned, he is aware it has an independent responsibility in that regard. We do not have the day-to-day control over Hydro that seemed to be the rule of thumb the honourable member's government took as part of its responsibility. As far as the Workers' Compensation Board is concerned, the honourable member will be aware that under the leadership of Dr. Elgie, in whom we all have a great deal of confidence, there has been an expansion of services not only for the good of the employees but also for that of the employers. This has been extensive and well supported on all sides. It has improved the services available to these people in a way that was certainly not characteristic of the leadership during the previous administration.

Mr. Gillies: We on this side of the House believe that when there are insufficient funds to give disabled people all the pensions to which they are entitled and when in two years the provincial share of education funding has dropped, the people of Ontario are not being well served by the growth in the bureaucracy. They are not being well served at all.

Faced with these facts, how can the Premier or the Treasurer possibly justify an increase of 6,500 employees, an increase in salaries alone of \$275 million, at a time when they say they cannot do what is required for the disabled and for our education system?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member will be aware that even during the dying days of the administration of which he was a part, the government found itself faced with the requirement for a substantial increase under the Young Offenders Act, which is a piece of federal legislation.

He asks me how we justify a substantial increase in a variety of ministries. As far as labour is concerned and as far as occupational health and safety is concerned, there are 200 people involved in that, and so the list goes. The honourable member will know that there had been a substantial and serious shortfall in the provision of services. We feel we are making this up in an efficient and effective way.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the members want to waste time, we will just wait. Do they not want the member to ask a question?

RADIOACTIVE SOIL

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I am sure the minister will be aware

that over 40 residents of McClure Crescent in his own riding are in the courts today fighting for justice as a result of living in homes that were allowed to be built on radioactive soil by a previous government. It is almost two years since the minister announced he was going to buy some of the homes. Those people are still fighting in the courts for damages and for a fair deal. Surely even this minister must realize that he has been unable to solve the problem.

Can he explain to us why these people are still having to go to court, why he is unable to get a solution and why he is still putting these people through the aggravation, worry and concern of living in homes that have been contaminated?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member would want to suggest that I have put these people through these hardships. As she knows, the previous government sat on this thing for a long time. The first announcement we made when we came into office was to relieve those people and give them a decision, allowing them to have an option in which to move. What we have done is bought those 42 homes.

I think the system is there to address their concerns through the courts. I am wondering if the honourable member is suggesting that I should circumvent the courts in some respect. They are presenting their case to the court system and I think justice will be done there.

Mrs. Grier: I do not think people going to court to appeal against a lack of action by a government and my calling on that government to intervene and arrive at a negotiated settlement can be described as subverting the courts.

The minister knows there are 80 homes affected. He has agreed to buy 40 of them. Even some of those 40 are still joined in the court action for a fair deal and for damages. It is still not too late to negotiate a settlement. The minister has not quarantined the homes—as his leader suggested in 1983 he would do if he were to lead the government—and he has not removed any of the soil.

Mr. Speaker: The question?

Mrs. Grier: Is the minister prepared to sit down and negotiate a fair deal and a fair solution with everyone who is affected and who wants to have that soil removed from the properties?

Hon. Mr. Curling: We have negotiated a fair deal on the 42 homes we bought there. We have bought those homes at market prices. Not only that, but if you can recall, Mr. Speaker—and I am sure you can; I will refresh the honourable member's mind—we paid for the legal fees, we

paid for the removal costs and we paid for the appraisals that were done. There were three appraisals there.

They had no option in the past, no other choice, but to stay there and go to the court. This government gave them an option by buying at market price. We have given them that decision.

We still stand by, and we have been advised by the scientists, that the level of radioactivity there is safe, that it is at a level—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We thought they had no other option, so we assessed—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There was no supplementary from the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis).

I can see that the member for St. George (Ms. Fish) would like to ask a question.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms. Fish: I have a question for the Premier. In the speech from the throne, the Premier indicated: "A housing-first policy will be applied to all available provincial lands to create more housing for low- and moderate-income earners. Where lands are deemed inappropriate for such use, they will be sold and the proceeds applied to an assured housing development initiative."

In the face of the appalling lack of affordable housing that we now see, can the Premier tell this House today how many lands have been allocated, where, how many units will be developed upon them and when?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I cannot give the honourable member the specific answer to the question she is asking, but I can respond in general terms.

As the member knows, this province owns a substantial amount of land, as does the federal government. We have been in very close communication with the federal government with respect to developing a policy to liberate those lands that we have, turning them into housing.

In some cases, of course, there may be an assessment that a particular piece of property is better sold off for commercial purposes and those moneys applied to housing and other areas. Swaps and other creative activities can be undertaken to try to use those lands to build the maximum amount of housing quickly. A complete inventory is being undertaken, and a development plan for each of those properties.

We will be very happy to share that with the member at the appropriate time.

Ms. Fish: In view of the fact that some \$12 million in the increase to the Ministry of Housing will go to administrative costs, in view of the fact that there are some additional 200 employees in that ministry, 21,000 rent review applications in a backlog and no initiatives under way to provide support for low- and moderate-income housing for new construction, since the Ontario Land Corp. advises that no lands have been designated and, further, that there will not be a clear fund set up for the proceeds of any sale of lands to be put aside for housing initiatives, can the Premier tell this House how much money will in fact go into creating new housing rather than engorging an enlarged bureaucracy?

1430

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not think my honourable friend is quite correct in her assessment. As she knows, the housing allocation is up very substantially to meet a number of specific purposes. Obviously, we are looking at the question of the socially disadvantaged, the handicapped and others. There is a very creative program developed in that regard, as well as using a multipronged strategy liberating the current lands.

As I said to my honourable friend, no one had ever taken this creative approach before. It is being developed on all the various pieces of land and we are happy to share that with her at the appropriate time.

VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to be sure that the honourable members took note of the students from the W. Ross MacDonald School for the visually impaired who are just now leaving the Speaker's gallery. We are delighted to have them here today and we hope they will come back.

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We would also like to welcome them and remind government members that there is an appropriate time for that type of recognition during members' statements, of which they used none today.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. McClellan: In view of the absence of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), I have a question for the Premier arising out of the decision of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal in the Villanucci case. I have the decision here and I also have the the permanent disability ratings schedule of the Workers' Compensation Board,

which workers in this province have referred to for the last 20 years as the meat chart and of which the tribunal said, "The board's 'clinical rating' procedure estimates the impairment of earning capacity even though the board medical examiners do not consider the impact of the particular injury on the worker's actual earning capacity." The tribunal has upheld the validity of the board using the meat chart.

It is two years to the day this Thursday that the Premier signed his name to a piece of paper promising to reform the pension system of the Workers' Compensation Board. Does he intend to bring in an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act in this session of this parliament?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I just had a quick review of the Villanucci case, which my honourable friend refers to, and I understand it created a new category to deal with the particular situation at hand. In response generally to the honourable member's question, as he knows, that matter is under review, I believe, by Mr. Weiler. We are looking at it and will be happy to report back to him at the appropriate time.

Mr. McClellan: That means no. Weiler is a warmed-over Tory appointee whose reports were rejected in 1981. The fact that he recycled them again in 1986 makes them no less unacceptable. In view of the fact that the Premier's promise to reform the meat chart is unfulfilled—

Mr. Polsinelli: Why did you guys block looking at Weiler in the committee?

Mr. McClellan: Because Weiler is not worth the powder to blow it to hell. That is why.

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Yorkview, stay calm.

Mr. McClellan: In view of the tremendous disappointment that injured workers have experienced with the Villanucci case—their hope for reform by route of appeal has been dashed—I want to ask the Premier whether he would not now consider a very simple but very profound amendment to section 45 of the Workers' Compensation Act, which deals with the establishment of permanent partial disability awards. Let him change the statute by giving the board the discretionary power to make supplementary awards based on loss of earning capacity. We could pass such an amendment, I assure the Premier, in less than two weeks.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I understand, and I could be wrong, that is what happened in the

Villanucci case, where there was a new category created to make a—

Mr. Rae: No.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If I am misreading it, then my honourable friend will tell me.

I will take under consideration any idea he has and discuss it with the minister. I am not in the position to give him that assurance today, but we are always looking for constructive and thoughtful suggestions.

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Shymko: My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. According to table C7 on page 50 of the budget, her ministry is the only one singled out from all the 27 ministries of this Liberal government to be on the hit list of the Treasurer to be slashed or guillotined to the tune of \$21 million, representing a cut of eight per cent, when no other ministry has been cut by any.

In reality, if you add the 7.1 per cent increase in government spending, this represents a 15 per cent cut. How does the minister justify this or reconcile this with all the sanctimonious statements about concerns for culture, multiculturalism, sensitivity, etc.?

Hon. Ms. Munro: Putting aside sanctimony, of which the member has given me a very good example, I should tell him that over the past two years the ministry has been very successful in occasioning those kinds of increments which make a good deal of sense to the cultural and multicultural community. In terms of capital spending last year, we did rather well.

We continue to be a ministry that sits well in priorities with the government. I see the member shaking his head, so he must agree, and I thank him. We will continue to fight for the rights of the multicultural and cultural community.

Mr. Shymko: If cutting down the budget from \$272 million last year to \$251 million, if a 15 per cent cut represents doing well, I would like to ask the minister why she and her sidekick the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht) do not resign immediately for this shameful cut in spending to a population representing 9.7 per cent of the people of Ontario?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I must say the member has not lost the acrimony with which he is so well festooned as of late. This minister is very sensitive to many of the things he is talking about. When he talks about significance in cutback in budget, he should be the first one to recognize the tremendous job this government

did to support culture and multiculturalism over the past two years.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Allen: I have a question for the Minister of Education. Prior to the throne speech, the press was full of stories—which I can only assume came from discussions with the ministry—with regard to a great education initiative that was going to be launched in this province. During the throne speech, we saw rather more vague references to teacher education, primary education renewal, drop-out rate attacks, literacy and so on.

Now, in the heat of the post-budget exchanges, if anything is clear it is at least that the ministry's budget is in steady state, if not less than that. May I ask the minister, whatever happened to the great education initiative in his visit with the Treasurer?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I appreciate the opportunity to engage my friend from Hamilton West in this debate. To call the provincial government's contribution in the coming budget year steady-state financing is quite clearly to misrepresent reality.

I have said in this House, and I will repeat once again today, that our operating grants are appreciably above inflation. We have improved, as the Treasurer has said on a number of occasions, the cash flow situation to school boards. We have tripled the capital allocation for next year, as compared to three years ago.

1440

Mr. Davis: How about last year?

Hon. Mr. Conway: My friend the member for Scarborough Centre intervenes. I think it is important for me to put on the record that the member for Scarborough Centre said proudly in our estimates a few months ago that he was not to be connected with or held responsible for any of the Conservative education policies prior to 1985.

I have to say that we have made significant strides on the financial side. Yes, more needs to be done and we hope to address more in the future. On the program side, in the area of the drop-out, on literacy, on teacher education, on access, on evaluation and a variety of other questions, we have done and intend to do a considerable amount.

Mr. Allen: I have to assume that if the minister thinks I am not dealing in reality, I think he is dealing in fantasy. If he takes the figures that are on page 64 and he works in an inflation

factor, and the reduction is there of this year over last year, and if he adds in the capital increase proportion that the budget has allocated in capital directions, he will find it is very difficult to argue that this is very much more than a steady-state budget.

I would like, therefore, to ask the minister to narrow down the focus a little bit on the illiteracy question. He may know that the federal government has recently received a report which suggests that the functional illiteracy problem in Canada is worse than we have anticipated, but that that government is not going to do anything directly beyond what the provinces do in order to attack it.

It is in the minister's court. Will he tell me how in the steady-state budget he is going to find the resources to launch any significant attack upon functional illiteracy board by board, community by community in Ontario, and if he does find it, what programs he is going to cut to free up that money?

Hon. Mr. Conway: My friends on the other side ask me to look at table C6 on page 64 of the Treasurer's budget, and I do so now. I look, for example, at the budget plan 1987-88 and I see a general legislative grant of \$3,579,000,000, almost \$400 million more than just two years before. I see that the cash flow improvement for 1986-87 is substantially better than the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) ever afforded.

I look at the school capital grants and I see that \$147 million is virtually double what the previous government was spending. I recognize that more needs to be done. I say to my friends from Sarnia to Hamilton that it is not just a matter of money, though this Treasurer and this government are dedicating appreciably more money. It is also a question of leadership and program, and we on this side are providing both in that connection as well.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I believe the member for Nipissing wants to ask a question.

Mr. Harris: That answer smells just about as bad as red trilliums smell.

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Harris: In view of the absence of the Premier, who ran out of this Legislature in great haste—I guess he got tired of referring questions or figuring out where to refer them—I have a question for the government House leader.

The minister must be aware of the disturbing signs coming from Quebec which indicate that the Bourassa government wants to change the

constitutional accord. To provide us with the openness that this House voted for last week, to help us to fully understand the implications of what may be the most significant national agreement short of the Constitution agreement itself, why will the government not permit a full range of the best constitutional minds to come before a committee of this House?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member will know that Orders and Notices already indicates that there will be a debate in the House next Tuesday on the wording of the Meech Lake agreement. The Premier will have the opportunity to hear the views of the leading spokespersons for the parties in the Legislature before he is called to Ottawa to consult with the other first ministers and the Prime Minister.

I think he is also aware that, whatever the outcome of that first ministers' meeting, the Premier has given a proper undertaking, in my view, that the results will be fully debated in the House and that there will be at that time a motion of an appropriate nature and the members will have a chance not only to express their views but also to cast a vote in this connection. The government feels that this body, the membership in this assembly, represents the views of the community in an appropriate way and we are seeking those views on Tuesday.

Mr. Harris: I do not want to involve the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) in this; I understand there may be some disagreement.

Tomorrow, as the House leader indicated, we will debate the constitutional agreement. Our party sees that as only the first step in what should be a full, open, public discussion on this important issue. In last Friday's Toronto Sun, the Premier is quoted as saying there is not enough time to hold full public hearings, even though our party suggested this over a month ago. There was time in Quebec. We indicated right off that they could be limited to one week if that would suit the Premier's timetable.

What is the hurry? Why is time so important that this agreement cannot face the full, open scrutiny which a majority of this Legislature has endorsed through the resolution last Thursday?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As I understand it, the Prime Minister of Canada, a good personal friend of the House leader opposite, has indicated he would like to consult with the first ministers on June 2, which is just a few days from now. The honourable member will know we have been undertaking extremely important debates in this House, which have really made it difficult to pursue other avenues of business, to the extent

that there is some time constraint, but not in the ratification.

I understand there is a three-year term during which the House would be asked to express its view by way of ratification. There is every indication that a full debate of the House would take place, followed by a—

Mr. Grossman: When are the hearings?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am not prepared to make a commitment in that regard.

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Grande: My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. Given the fact that last week I asked the minister about where her new multicultural policy is, given the fact that she has been talking about it for a year and a half at the very least, and has been raising expectations all over the province in regard to this multicultural policy, and given the fact that her answer was that some time during the month of June she will make the announcement but the Treasurer does not have a cent in his budget to implement this policy, can the minister explain how her ministry is going to bring about that which she proposed when she said wanted the policy of multiculturalism to be measured in terms of jobs, in terms of dollars and in terms of representations on boards?

Where are the dollars?

Hon. Ms. Munro: The honourable member would know that jobs can be created either from new money or from existing money. When the time comes for this government to announce a new multicultural policy, we will take into account not only the \$4 million announced in the budget but also initiatives which have been entered into by various ministers.

Mr. Grande: Given the fact that, indeed, \$21 million was cut from her budget from last year to this year—sure, jobs can be created with old money, but the fact is that the old money is gone and she does not have the new money to implement the policy—can the minister tell us how people in this province can take her and her government seriously when she talks about these new initiatives but when it comes down to the final outcome, to putting her money where her mouth is, the money is not there?

1450

Hon. Ms. Munro: I can tell the member that the people of this province, contrary to what he thinks, have indeed trusted us to come out with the kind of signal that indicates this government

is moving into new strategies as far as what multiculturalism is all about.

Interjections.

Hon. Ms. Munro: While honourable members may laugh, I hope they are not laughing when the camera is pointing right at them. This government is dedicated to working with multicultural people to make sure not only that they have the kind of services they need but also that they get a government-wide policy.

Interjections.

Hon. Ms. Munro: The member's friend certainly seems to be very good on the violin. We should see whether we can give him a grant through the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

I can tell the member that this government is committed. He can take my word for it; he can take the government's word for it. He can also talk to the multicultural people in this province, and they will tell him they trust that we have received information and are acting on it.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr. McGuigan: My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. As reported in the Windsor Star of April 20, Leon and Lise Perrier of Maidstone township, travelling by motorcycle on county road 42 near the Windsor airport at 12:15 a.m., April 19, struck the back of a parked tractor-trailer. This couple was killed in the crash.

The tractor-trailer had turned into the driveway of a private marshalling yard and had then stopped, with the trailer still on the roadway. The driver had left the cab in order to open the gate to the yard. Of course, the closed gate prevented the driver from clearing the roadway.

As an example to the private sector, would the minister immediately give an order to have all Ministry of Transportation and Communications yards move their gates back from the roadway by a distance sufficient to allow all legal truck lengths space to pull into the entrance way and stop, while fully clearing the roadway?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I thank the member for the question. I am already aware of some of the circumstances that surrounded that unfortunate tragedy in the Windsor area. I have already directed through the deputy that our regional directors move back, wherever possible within the limits of the road allowance, any of the MTC facilities—fencing, barriers, gateways, etc.—to prevent that kind of tragedy recurring.

Mr. McGuigan: Would the minister look into the possibility of passing regulations so that all

accesses granted in the future have a condition applied to them that the gateways have to be moved back a sufficient distance? Would he also look into the possibility of passing regulations to make all yards in the public sector, as well as in MTC, retrofit the gates to those standards?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I would be glad to give my colleague the undertaking that we will review the content of his request as it affects the private sector and private property. As I say, we are doing it within the ministry; we will certainly undertake to review it within the private sector.

APPORTIONMENT OF EDUCATION TAXES

Mr. Mitchell: I have a question of the Minister of Education, or should I suggest the minister for interference with the Ontario Municipal Board?

The minister is well aware—and his own ministry has recognized the fact—that the city of Nepean's education apportionment over the past number of years has exceeded its fair share by some \$28 million. He is also aware that the township of Goulbourn is paying more than its fair share.

He is also aware that an appeal was made this year, as is the practice every year, at which Nepean and Goulbourn won, for one of their rare occasions, after which he immediately asked the OMB to re-evaluate the decision because of the effect it was going to have on those other municipalities that were not themselves paying their fair share.

Does he intend to constantly interfere with OMB decisions or is he going to change his policy?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I appreciate the question. What I am going to do is to listen with care and sensitivity to representations made, as with the squire of Manotick, who came to me with a delegation of municipal leaders from communities such as Rideau and Osgoode and other affected municipalities in the Carleton county area, who quite rightly asked that we consider options to alleviate the burden those municipalities would face. I met those people as I have happily and recently met the mayor of Nepean and the reeve of Goulbourn.

We have asked the Ontario Municipal Board to review the matter in the light of aspects it was not able to consider in the first instance. We did what we were quite entitled to do. That case is being heard today, and I expect this government is going to be able to resolve a situation that my friend the member for Carleton's government left unresolved for many years.

Mr. Mitchell: With respect to the minister's reply, he is well aware—I am sure he interprets the Education Act the same way I do—that the Education Act really is the guideline for the method with which he operates. Frankly, the minister is moving against its guidelines.

I also suggest to the minister that he is being blatantly unfair. What he is saying to me is that a Nepean resident on a boundary road between, say, Nepean and Kanata, where he is paying \$900 in education taxes and a resident of Kanata is paying \$600, should walk across the road and say: "Here is a gift. We are overpaying but that is all right. Here is a gift for coming and living in this area." When is the minister going to change this policy that his ministry says is wrong?

Hon. Mr. Conway: In the first instance, let me say it is interesting and almost a pleasure to hear from someone on the Tory side who actually sounds like he is running for re-election.

Second, I want to say to my friend the member for Carleton that he can be assured I will work very actively and vigorously for a solution to this difficulty. I want the Ontario Municipal Board to review the case with a view to a number of factors that were not fully understood in the first instance: the altered tax base and the implications for not just the Carleton jurisdiction but also many others.

I can assure my friend the member for Carleton that we on this side will work very vigorously towards a resolution of this matter and that we want to do so with fairness and equity to all parties in Carleton and elsewhere in the province.

POLICE PURSUITS

Mr. Philip: I have a question for the Solicitor General, who will be aware that his own committee recommended in 1985 that police chases be allowed only where an offence is committed under the Criminal Code. I am wondering whether he is aware of the tragic deaths of two young people, James Vankregten, who died at age 20, and Tracey Cook, who died at age 17, both of whom died as a result of police chases where violations under the Highway Traffic Act were suspected. Is he aware of those deaths and does he feel that kind of tragic carnage on the highways as a result of police chases is justified in this province at this point in time?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I am very well aware of those situations and of every police chase that has occurred in this province since taking office. I can also inform the member that a final report from staff has been presented; I will receive it this afternoon and will consider it in making a final

recommendation to cabinet in the very near future.

USE OF TIME IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw two matters to the attention of the members. The first matter is that in the last 10 days there have been three instances when members have risen in their places to introduce visitors in the gallery. I hope all members are aware that there is nothing in the rules that allows a member to stand on a point of order or a point of personal privilege to introduce visitors in the gallery. I just hope that all members will stick to that decision by this House.

1500

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The other matter: On Thursday last, the honourable House leader for the official opposition, the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), raised a point of order regarding the recording in Hansard of words uttered in Polish on May 13, 1987, by the honourable member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko). I undertook to look into the matter and am now ready to rule.

Members will find that in the past, certain parts of speeches uttered in the House in languages other than French or English have sometimes been printed in Hansard in a translated format. This, however, has raised certain problems and one of the most obvious ones, which was actually raised by a present member, is to the effect that a member who translates his own remarks may easily misrepresent his original verbal presentation in a subjective or biased moment and also commit serious errors in translation, and I am quoting.

I would agree with that opinion and in order to rule in this present case, I must fall back on our present practice as well as our standing orders. Our present practice as followed by Hansard is that when the House allows a member to speak in a language other than French or English, Hansard does not record the actual words but will enter a phrase which indicates what language was spoken at that time. Secondly, our standing orders are very specific as to language and I would take a minute to quote to you standing order 19(a): "Every member desiring to speak must rise in his place and address himself to the Speaker, in either English or French. S. O. 19(a).]"

Another matter which has a bearing upon this is that there are no funds available to the Legislature which would permit official transla-

tion in these cases. I therefore rule in confirming our present practice that when a member obtains the unanimous consent of the House to go beyond the limits of standing order 19(a) with regard to language spoken in the assembly, this does not include verbatim reporting in that day's Hansard. The present practice of Hansard recording what language was then spoken is to be continued without the actual words being consigned.

Mr. Shymko: Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: That is a ruling. The honourable member has the right, I suppose, to challenge the ruling. There is no debate.

USE OF TIME IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could raise a point of order. Your ruling has brought into question a practice—I thought the House leader for the government, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon), quite properly introduced some visitors in your gallery today. I accept your ruling, but I would not want to see the type of introduction the Treasurer made today not be permissible in this Legislature.

There are other ways. Somebody could rise and ask for unanimous consent, which I doubt would ever be refused, in which case we could carry on merrily with all our introductions. Who among us is going to be the one to say, "No, the mayor from Sudbury cannot be recognized," or "No, these people cannot be recognized"?

In the past, I think that type of introduction has been very brief. It has not upset the Legislature and it has worked well for a number of years. Rather than try to raise it as a point of order or a point of privilege, I suggest to the Legislature that I see nothing wrong with a quick type of introduction when special people do come and visit us here in the Legislature.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I know you will be glad to have at least an additional point of view. I want to apologize to the House for interrupting the course of question period with respect to the W. Ross MacDonald School for the visually impaired.

As a matter of fact, as the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) would know, that fine edifice is within the boundaries of his constituency. When I received a note that they were here, I replied that I was not able to introduce them until at least the end of question period, when I thought your wrath, Mr. Speaker, might be diminished somewhat. Unfortunately, even before I got the note, they were heading out and I thought it was so important for them and for us

that they be recognized that I did what I did. I certainly want to apologize for that.

On the other hand, to introduce all school groups and all groups may be all right, but the members will recall a time when it really was a bit much when every Lions Club and every United Church Women's group, all of them worthy indeed, were introduced from the Legislature accompanied by rounds of enthusiastic applause. I am not so sure we want to do that either. Maybe we could give it some additional thought.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the member's comments. Probably we could send a copy of this Hansard to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly when it further looks at the standing orders.

PETITION

THERAPEUTIC ABORTIONS

Mr. Andrewes: I have a petition which reads: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Honourable Murray Elston, Minister of Health, and the elected officials of the government of Ontario not move ahead to implement the recommendations in the Powell report on therapeutic abortions in Ontario, act justly and provide protection for unborn children in Ontario, take immediate steps to more carefully study abortion laws, propose alternatives to abortion, offer financial assistance to crisis pregnancy centres."

This petition is signed by 124 members of the Free Reformed Church in Vineland.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT

Mrs. Grier moved first reading of Bill 72, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs. Grier: The purpose of this bill is to aid in the enforcement of the rules of the road as they apply to bicyclists. It adds the requirement that bicyclists provide identifying information to police officers who request it. The act provides that if they do not provide that information, they can be charged.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NURSING HOMES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Elston moved third reading of Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act.

Mr. Andrewes: Before we give this bill third reading, I just want to make a few brief remarks. I think it is significant that in the hearings held on Bills 176 and 177, we had a very diverse group of individuals and organizations presenting to us. Although we did not always find ourselves in full agreement with one another, I think it is significant that there was a good deal of common ground found in those hearings among those who appeared.

A significant feature of this bill is the residents' bill of rights. It would have been our party's preference that the minister would have brought in an amendment which would have given a clear definition to the contractual arrangement that the Ministry of Health has with nursing home operators. Rather than that, the minister chose to leave us with only one option, and that was to place the onus on the residents to enforce that contract, thus creating the potential for an adversarial situation between the operators of nursing homes and the residents.

Left without this kind of clear statement, our party felt obligated to support the amendment on the bill of rights, as it did. That bill of rights now becomes part of Bill 176.

1510

Finally, might I say in reference to this whole field of nursing homes and the operation of nursing homes that on page 12 of the budget the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) brought down last Wednesday, there is a very brief mention, about one and a half lines, that says the government will provide additional funding to improve the quality of care in nursing homes. It is a very vague line. It is one and a half lines in a 70-page document.

I only ask that the minister, at some appropriate time, make clear to us what his intent is. Is his intent simply to increase the global per diem now paid by the Ministry of Health to nursing home operators on behalf of residents or is his intent to prescribe a line-by-line budget increase?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Members, could you please carry on your conversations elsewhere. The noise level is getting to the point that we cannot hear the member debating.

Mr. Callahan: Yes, we cannot hear anything.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: He is not on topic anyway.

Mr. Andrewes: Perhaps if the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) cared to listen, he might learn something that he might take home to the nursing home residents in his riding. He was not listening very carefully.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Perhaps the member would address the chair.

Mr. Andrewes: I only say through you, Mr. Speaker, for the sake of the record, that we now wait for clarity on that one-and-a-half line statement that was made in the Treasurer's budget last Wednesday and that 29,000 residents of nursing homes and their families are waiting as well.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Very briefly, we in this party are very proud that this bill is coming forward today, along with its companion bill, Bill 177. For a number of years, members of this caucus, and in particular our leader, the member for York South (Mr. Rae), have been fighting for reform of the Nursing Homes Act. The major changes that these two bills represent are in fact major reforms, and we are very proud to have been part of that process.

I might point out to members of the Legislature that when these bills were introduced in the Legislature, they did not have a bill of rights for residents. They did not have a process for public hearings when licences for nursing homes were being changed or new ones being issued. They did not have full financial disclosure, they did not have service contracts, and there are a number of other areas that the original nursing home bills introduced by the Liberal government did not have.

We in this party—my colleague the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen) and the chairman of the committee, the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston)—worked very hard in presenting the amendments that I put forward on behalf of this caucus as Health critic. We got these amendments carried, and I believe it is one of the most significant accomplishments of minority government in the two years that this minority government has existed.

There are many other things that must be accomplished in this field. These amendments do not, by any stretch of the imagination, solve the problems of the residents in nursing homes in this province. The government has not adequately dealt with the whole area of enforcement.

I disagree with the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) who says that the bill of rights puts full responsibility for enforcement under this act upon the residents. That is not accurate at all. The fact of the matter is there are two mechanisms of enforcement. One is through the normal mechanism of the Nursing Homes Act in the violation of the act, which the minister and the ministry control, and the other is through the service contract that is signed by the nursing home and the resident and could result in civil litigation.

We can pass the best Nursing Homes Act in the entire world and if the government does not have the intestinal fortitude to enforce that act very strictly in the interest of the 32,000 or 31,000 residents of nursing homes, the act is meaningless. At this point, I am very sad to say that the current act has not been properly enforced.

Finally, we have to deal more adequately with the issue of profit versus nonprofit. Ontario's nursing home system is primarily a for-profit system. We remain convinced in this caucus that there will never be fundamental change in the motivation for providing care in Ontario's nursing home system as long as the for-profit system is dominant.

In fact, we believe very strongly that the for-profit system should be phased out and the nonprofit system should be brought in, where the only motivation is quality of care and quality of life. Then it does not matter; there are no profits in the picture at all. Today, our system is primarily based on profit and return on investment for shareholders.

We look at this as the first small step towards more major reforms for seniors requiring care, both within the institutional setting and, primarily, within our community.

Mr. McLean: I would like to talk briefly on the bill. I am very concerned about some of the contents, because I had occasion to sit on the committee for some time. I think the reforms for seniors are the most important part of it.

The other concern I have with the bill is with regard to the volunteers and the committees that are being formed, which I think are great. It is something that is probably long overdue. I hope that the people in those residences will be able to take advantage of them. When we talk about disclosure for patients, I think it is important that they be able to have that in effect.

When I look at the number of residents in nursing homes across this province, I think this legislation is a start in the right direction. When we talk in the bill with regard to profit versus nonprofit, I see nothing wrong with people who want to make a profit. I am sure the honourable minister himself agrees with that. But I am concerned about and I do hope to be enlightened about the volunteerism aspect.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I wish to thank the two critics and the member for Simcoe East (Mr. McLean) for their brief contributions. I think all of us recognize that more must be done and that, in fact, there are plans to do more. We will be working very hard with respect to the develop-

ment of regulations to further enhance our ability to deal with difficulties.

Members and others have a commitment in the throne speech and the budget with respect to some of the difficulties raised by my colleagues the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) and the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes). We have made a very important first step towards dealing with this issue in terms of a quality-of-life issue. I want people to recognize these new amendments to the existing legislation, as a way in which we will be proceeding in the years to come to ensure that we are providing the quality of life our seniors deserve.

I think I can say on behalf of the people who have worked very hard on this, the people with whom we consulted prior to the introduction of the bill, the people who attended at committee and otherwise, that this truly was an example of the broadest type of consultation ending up with a product that came out of a very open and, at times, intense discussion of several of the issues.

More remains to be done. I commit myself to doing more for our seniors to ensure that areas of difficulty are dealt with, that we highlight the ability of seniors right across this province to live full and independent lives and, where appropriate and necessary, that we as a government respond to the needs of our seniors.

It is with that in mind that I am pleased to see third reading of Bill 176 and the amendments as a result of the passage of this bill being placed in law and assisting us to do more for the seniors in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

1520

HEALTH FACILITIES SPECIAL ORDERS AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Elston moved third reading of Bill 177, An Act to amend the Health Facilities Special Orders Act, 1983.

Hon. Mr. Elston: By way of explanation, this bill contains amendments to the Health Facilities Special Orders Act which are parallel to and required by the amendments just passed under Bill 176. I appreciate the passage of these to complement that initiative.

Motion agreed to.

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Laughren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In keeping with your ruling earlier today, I will not introduce my daughter who is in the gallery this afternoon.

I am pleased, on behalf of the New Democrats, to be responding to the budget of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). The members will not be surprised, I am sure, to know that we are disappointed in this budget. We knew, during almost the entire past year, that when it came time for him to draft his budget, money was not going to be a problem for the Treasurer, but we knew his priorities would be a problem.

The question in drafting this budget was one of priorities, not of money. That is a departure from the struggles Treasurers have had in this province for the last number of years. This government decided there were to be no priorities in this budget, save one. That one priority in the budget is that there would be no direct tax increases.

At first blush, that certainly sounds great, but we will see, as time goes on, just how well that washes in the province as it sinks in among the population just what the Treasurer did not do, given the funds he had at his disposal. It is never difficult, surely, to prepare a budget when money is not a question. It is not difficult to maintain the status quo, if you have a few bucks to do so.

This budget does nothing for the thousands of young people who have completed their education and are looking for a job. This budget does nothing for the homeless, given the tight rental market and given the skyrocketing home prices, particularly in Metropolitan Toronto. This budget does nothing for working families seeking affordable day care in the province. For northern Ontario residents, looking for a diversified and more secure economy, this budget does so little as to be laughable.

We have already heard from the two opposition parties just how shallow the government's commitment to education is. One can look long and hard for any kind of commitment in this budget to reduce class size or to meet even a fair proportion of the demands of school boards for capital expenditures, and it is not there.

There is a reason why there was no action on these issues. We think it is because the Treasurer simply could not bring himself to make any hard decisions or any tradeoffs when it came to disposing of the new revenues he had. We should be aware of just how much he had in new revenues; not just new revenues, unanticipated revenues. He planned his budget and he had \$1.2 billion more than he thought he was going to have.

Surely to goodness that allows him to make some pretty nice choices as to what he can do with that money. As I will outline in more detail a little later on, this party indicated to the Treasurer that we would even support some new taxes if they were to help remove some of the inequities in the present tax system. I will detail that precisely.

Mr. Haggerty: In what areas?

Mr. Laughren: I will give that precisely to the member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty). I will not speak in generalities; I will give him some details.

Despite all the hoopla surrounding the fact that there are no tax increases, there is really not much here in this. When it comes to education, we have already explained to the Treasurer, and I think he is feeling somewhat embarrassed by the fact, that there is less of a commitment to education in this budget than there was when the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) was the Minister of Education.

When it comes to the development of northern Ontario, I am definitely going to spend a little time on that. I think that is an issue that the government is going to find very difficult to explain all across northern Ontario: no action on gas prices, no minimum corporation tax, no capital gains tax, no land speculation tax and very little for low income tax earners in the province.

I promised that I would be specific when it came to taxation, and I know the member for Erie is going to stay and listen to my remarks in order to get the full impact of just precisely how I would change the tax system in Ontario. Surely, one of the key ways to measure fairness in a system like ours is the kind of tax system we have. This budget makes virtually no attempt to make our tax system more equitable.

Since this government came to power, personal income tax revenue has increased from \$7.25 billion to \$9.96 billion for this year. That is an increase of \$2.7 billion in provincial revenues strictly on personal income tax revenues. As a percentage of total revenue raised, personal income tax revenue has increased from 26 per cent to 29 per cent in the same period, and for the fiscal year just ended, the Treasurer has a windfall of \$670 million from personal income tax revenue alone.

What do low-income taxpayers get from all this? They get a \$10-million reduction in their Ontario income tax because the Treasurer has raised the zero tax threshold to \$2,483. This is still \$207 below what the 1981 zero tax threshold level would have been, had it simply been

adjusted to increases in the cost of living. To put that in perspective, the Treasurer has announced that he is removing some of the low-income taxpayers from the burden of taxes. Yet if we had a cost-of-living indexing which did that automatically, taxpayers would be better off today than they are now under the Treasurer's measures.

The Treasurer's own staff admitted in the lockup that even after the measures of this budget, for a family of four with one payer of income tax in that family earning \$15,500 a year, that taxpayer would still be paying about \$450 of provincial income tax. We think that is simply outrageous. That family is about \$7,000 below the Statscan poverty level. How the Treasurer can sit there and feel that he has made any kind of contribution to low-income taxpayers in the province while he takes that kind of action is beyond our comprehension.

Thus far, he proposed that to eliminate all provincial income tax for those at or below the poverty line would cost the Treasury about \$110 million this year. Just to put that \$110 million in perspective, that is about eight per cent of the new money that the Treasurer had come into the consolidated revenue fund this year, so we are suggesting that it would not in any way threaten the fiscal integrity of the province. We are saying, "Take eight per cent of that new money and ease the burden on the low-income taxpayers in the province."

The Treasurer also announced a modest increase in the property tax credit of the 1987 tax year, which he says will result in an increase of benefits of \$85 million. Yet the real value of these credits has fallen by 65 per cent since their introduction. When the Liberals came to power two years ago the value of those tax credits was \$292 million. For this coming year, the value of the tax credits is \$280 million.

Once again, put in perspective, not only has the value of the tax credits, which are for low-income people, dropped by \$12 million in absolute numbers, but if you build in the inflation factor, they have fallen by \$40 million. The Treasurer is not giving anything to low-income people. As a matter of fact, since this government came to power it has made the situation worse for low-income-tax people. For the Treasurer to stand up and trumpet the virtue of his tax credits is simply not honest.

1530

The Treasurer also announced a modest increase in Ontario health insurance plan premium assistance, a move that will cost a grand total of \$20 million. That is a long way from the

promise of that government to eliminate OHIP premiums. There is no mention whatsoever of that in the budget. We on this side have proposed that we eliminate OHIP premiums over a period of five years and start with low-income taxpayers who currently still have to pay OHIP premiums.

There are obviously a number of things the Treasurer could have done to make our tax system more equitable. I promised the member for Erie, who I notice is still in the assembly, that I would be very specific about what we would do because we do not believe it is appropriate simply to criticize. We feel it is appropriate to say what we would do in place of what the Treasurer has done.

We believe it is time provincial income taxes were eliminated for those living below the poverty level.

Mr. Polsinelli: What is the poverty level?

Mr. Laughren: I am using the poverty level as established by Statscan. For a family of four in Ontario, it is around \$21,000, give or take; almost \$22,000 a year. The Treasurer knows—he has our material—exactly what that will cost the Treasury and he knows the province can afford it as well.

As a first step towards the complete elimination of OHIP premiums, we also recommended that these premiums be eliminated for the working poor. It is entirely unfair that the most basic of services in our society, that of health care, is financed by a regressive tax, and it really is a tax although I notice the Treasurer was very careful in his document not to list it as one of the taxes in the province because the Conservatives got into trouble with that one year when they listed it as a tax. It is very cute the way he did that.

The Treasurer, by the way, is on the record as expressing unhappiness with the whole question of a capital gains tax not being in place. We tried to say to him, "We want to assist you in resolving your unhappiness," and suggested that there be a reintroduction of the succession duties tax in the absence of a capital gains tax. I recall very well when the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) eliminated succession duties in the province. Talk about protecting not only high incomes but also established wealth in the province. I am surprised the Treasurer would go along with a blatantly Tory measure in the province; no succession duties whatsoever.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We want to be able to take it with us.

Mr. Laughren: Yes, he does. By the way, I should tell the Treasurer that we would exempt

the family farm, so perhaps he should not be as nervous as he is about his succession duties.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not have one.

Mr. Laughren: Maybe Mrs. Nixon could relax then.

It is also not appropriate that first-time home buyers in this province have been effectively denied the opportunity of buying a home any more. If we look at Metropolitan Toronto, the average price of a new home now is approximately \$200,000. Real estate sources estimate that speculators account for between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of sales in the resale home market. What we are saying is that it is time for a real estate speculation tax to make it unattractive for speculators to flip homes. We hear stories of speculators buying homes and then selling them before the deal is even closed, simply to make some quick bucks.

Another area we suggested to the Treasurer is the whole question of tobacco taxes. I know the Treasurer is somewhat sensitive about tobacco taxes, given the area he represents. We know as well that smoking is responsible for over 12,000 deaths in Ontario every year. We believe it is not fair that as the damaging effects of smoking on both smokers and nonsmokers continue to mount, the Ontario government continues to encourage smoking by levying the lowest tobacco taxes in all of Canada. Ontario has the lowest tobacco taxes of any province in Canada.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We are higher than the northern states. We are much higher than New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania or Michigan. We are very high.

Mr. Mackenzie: There is the free trader talking.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Laughren: It is good to get the Treasurer's opinion of free trade on the record for the first time. We are talking about Canadian tobacco taxes. In Ontario, the tax per cigarette is just under three cents. What we have suggested to the Treasurer is that this tax be raised to about four cents which is a good average for all of Canada. All of that money, every penny of that money—

Mr. G. I. Miller: Let us make it free choice. Let the individual make the free choice of what he wants to do. You are putting the farmers out of business.

Mr. Laughren: I am sorry the member for Haldimand-Norfolk (Mr. G. I. Miller) is getting so upset. Before he gets too upset, let me assure him that every single penny of new money to be

raised by cigarette taxes should go to public health programs, antismoking clinics and aiding tobacco farmers to shift from tobacco to other crops; every single penny. We are not talking about a tax grab here. We are talking about a responsible, public health measure.

We know the tax system in this province is not fair. It is as plain and simple as that. We shall continue to fight for a fair tax system. The province is sitting back saying: "We are waiting for the federal government. It is going to bring in some comprehensive tax reform." Anything the federal Tories bring in in the name of tax reform is not going to satisfy working people in Ontario. If tax reform is important, it is important today. There is no reason we should have to wait for it.

Mr. Warner: Right on.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: David, what do you know about working people?

Mr. Laughren: As much as the Treasurer.

As we talk about reform, it is appropriate that I move into an area where a great deal of reform is needed, namely child care programs. In response to our leader, we heard the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) say today that for the next couple of years there would be 5,000 new child care spaces in Ontario. I heard him say that this very afternoon, at a time when the lowest estimate I have ever seen is that we need about 85,000 new spaces, and they are as high as 100,000 new spaces. The minister is talking about 5,000 new spaces in the next two years. That is not a commitment to major child care reform in the province.

Working families can no longer cope with Ontario's inadequate and outdated child care system. Despite repeated promises from this government and the one before it to treat child care as a basic public service, virtually nothing has happened. Fees average \$4,500 to \$5,000 a year. That is more than most families can afford. Because centres are still totally dependent on parent fees for funding, child care workers are still notoriously underpaid, averaging about \$14,000 a year. The situation is intolerable.

A major commitment of funds for the development and operation of child care services is needed to confront the crisis head on. The government's promise to fund child care services has already been diluted by its stated intention to give money to commercial centres. This foolhardy plan will divert scarce funds away from the nonprofit sector, which provides far superior care, into the pockets of private operators. I feel the same way about private child care as I do about the private nursing home business. The

difference between private day care and public-funded, nonprofit day care is the same in my mind as with nursing homes. The difference between quality care and care is the element of profit and shareholders' money. We do not need that in those two areas, child care and nursing homes.

We have stated categorically where we think the money should go. We think it should go for capital funding, development assistance and operational funding. There should be conditional grants to allow the for-profit operations to shift to nonprofit. There should be a subsidy for new spaces. In our game plan, we would allocate \$179 million to day care. That sounds like a lot of money, and it is, but I want to tell the Treasurer that it reflects this party's commitment to a significant child care program in the province.

1540

Our society has changed profoundly in the last few years. There was a day when two working spouses meant a self-indulgent lifestyle. Today, it means economic survival for working people. To those who resent tax dollars going to support a second income, imagine trying to buy a house in Toronto at the \$200,000 level. Child care is no longer an indulgence for trendy couples. It is a necessity for families that want to realize the dream of home ownership.

Speaking of home ownership, the government's commitment to housing is increasingly being shown to be in a shambles. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) simply does not have a grasp of his ministry and the Treasurer has not made any major commitment to housing in the province.

Housing is a major concern for people and despite its economic and social significance, this government continues to ignore it. Ontario's housing situation is the worst since the Second World War. Vacancy rates in apartments are abysmally low. Across Ontario, they average about 0.5 per cent; in Toronto, they are 0.1 per cent. That is one vacancy in every thousand apartments and they are not vacant for very long. We have a very serious housing crisis in Ontario.

The option of home ownership has been eliminated for many citizens in Ontario because of the cost of a home. We know that prices have skyrocketed about 25 per cent in just the last year alone. Despite the fact that the government's financial situation is the strongest in many years, the province has failed to deal with the dual problem of affordability and supply. The construction of housing is a very positive economic activity in Ontario. It is labour intensive, which

results in a high number of jobs being created for the amount of government spending. It also uses materials, such as lumber, that are found within the province, thus providing an enormous economic spinoff.

The only successful, although limited in scale, housing program the Ontario government has undertaken since assuming office is the three-year joint federal-provincial project that funds the construction of 20,000 nonprofit and co-operative housing units. The limitation of this program is illustrated by the fact that the rental housing units built in 1986 and 1987 are only about half of the 24,000 units needed per year. The province should at least double its commitment to the nonprofit housing sector to 13,500 units a year. As the current program is costing the province \$25 million a year out of the total of \$47.5 million with the federal government, an additional \$25 million should not produce too great a strain on the government's finances.

As well, the construction of an additional 20,000 rental units over three years would result in the creation of thousands of additional jobs. The government's other housing supply programs, Renterprise and convert-to-rent, have once again shown the folly of throwing money at developers to build large-scale rental housing. The apartments are generally unaffordable to modest-income families. They constitute a substantial drain on the public purse—\$150 million over the life of the Renterprise program—that could be better spent on affordable nonprofit and co-operative housing. In the case of Renterprise, up to half of the 5,000 units will simply not end up as rentals, but will instead end up as condominiums.

Finally, the question of home ownership must be examined when looking at the failures of the government's housing policy. In the two years since the government has assumed office, the cost of buying a house has moved upwards by leaps and bounds. The average price of a home in Toronto has gone from \$118,000 less than a year ago to \$200,000 in April 1987. The much-sought-after dream of home ownership is becoming increasingly remote for moderate-income families and this Liberal government has failed to slow down the price hikes by taking our advice and bringing in some kind of housing or resale speculation tax that would discourage that kind of flipping.

The government should also take direct action to ensure that affordable homes are being built in Ontario. It should undertake some kind of new-home-ownership-made-easy assistance pro-

gram. This program would have the government use some of its extensive land holdings. The government mentions that every now and again. It hints at it but there are no details on it. There are such holdings in Pickering and we could have modest homes constructed on those parcels of land. These homes could be sold to families of modest income, say below \$40,000, at the cost of constructing them while the ownership of the land would remain with the province. The homes must be owner-occupied. When the home owners decide to move, they could sell their homes back to the province. These home owners would in turn receive the equity they built up in the house plus inflation.

Not only would such a plan provide direct housing for thousands of people in the province, but it would also ease the pressure on the heated-up housing market in Ontario, bringing at least partial relief to all people who are hunting for a home. Surely it is time for the government to take bold and imaginative action to deal with the long-standing housing needs of ordinary citizens of the province. It is with great disappointment that we find the government's economic plan, this budget, provides only a minor effort to deal with important housing needs.

I was intrigued a few minutes ago when the Treasurer made some mention, in a rather peripheral way I admit, of the United States, because I would like to spend a couple of moments on the whole question of free trade and this party's position vis-à-vis the government's position and the official opposition's position.

We have seen this budget and we have seen the one little paragraph in the budget that makes mention of free trade, but that is all it does. We know the Treasurer is very proud of the revenues that have flowed into his Treasury but we feel there are some disquieting signs and I suggest the Treasurer needs to contemplate them. The free trade talks are hanging over our heads and while I suspect the Treasurer thinks they are hanging over our heads like a cloud and that the cloud has a silver lining, I am not too sure it has for Ontario.

The Department of Regional Industrial Expansion, DRIE, states that there could be job losses in a whole range of industries in this province, including automobiles, tires, major appliances, toiletry preparations, food processing, brewing, distilling, flour milling, poultry, converted paper products, finished wood products, carton, box and corrugated containers, electrical products, urban buses, construction machinery and prima-

ry glass. Ontario, Canada's manufacturing heartland, could indeed face some difficult times ahead. That same DRIE report indicated that there are 280,000 manufacturing jobs at risk under a free trade agreement.

New Democrats have been firm and consistent on the issue of free trade. We do not believe it is in the best interests of Ontario and Canada. We do not believe we live in a world of equals. If we did, I for one would be willing to compete with our trading partners because we then would indeed be on a level playing field. Free trade cannot level that playing field the federal government is so anxious to talk about because the two participants in this case, Canada and the United States, are not equal. That is exactly why we are so concerned about rushing headlong into a free trade agreement. We would very much like to have some commitment from the Treasurer or the Premier (Mr. Peterson) as to where they think they are going with it.

We are not opposed to free trade as some kind of knee-jerk, anti-American response. Rather, we think it is not in our best interest, plain and simple. I think the Macdonald commission did us all a service when it said something very startling. Macdonald said that we have a choice in this country. Either we can have a planned economy or we must have free trade. I agree with him. Mr. Macdonald and the commission understood very well that you can no longer live in this world without having some kind of game plan and I believe that.

We part company with Mr. Macdonald, the federal Tories and the provincial Tories. God only knows whether we do with the Liberals in Ontario; I do not know where they stand but we as well believe there needs to be a game plan. Free trade is a game plan—that we concede—but so is a properly planned economy. I would opt every time for a properly planned economy because I do not believe that free trade will give us the answers that some people seem to think it will.

As a matter of fact, it is Mr. Macdonald—the Thumper, as he is known—who is out there now thumping for free trade along with Peter Loughheed and trying to sell it.

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Hon. Mr. Nixon: And Darcy McKeough.

Mr. Laughren: I am not surprised at that allegiance of McKeough, Macdonald and Loughheed. What a triumvirate.

We know the federal government has clearly opted for the free trade option. Provincial Tories have opted for the free trade option. I understand

that, but what I do not understand is where the provincial Liberals stand on it. That is incomprehensible.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is your problem.

Mr. Laughren: It is not my problem; it is all of Ontario's problem. That the Treasurer would bring in a major budget statement in a year when the free trade issue may very well be resolved and have one small paragraph in it, given the warnings that have been placed before us by the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion, and not say anything else about it, is reprehensible.

We believe we cannot walk away from the option that Mr. Macdonald puts before us, a planned economy or free trade. We have made our decision, and we think it is time the Liberal government did as well. They simply do not have a policy.

Those of us who live in northern Ontario have seen how free trade works. We have seen it in the resource sector, and we have seen what that means. It means that you exploit the hell out of the resource and do not tamper with it. Do not dare tamper with it, because the first thing you know, your trading partner, who thinks he is in a free trade arrangement with you, will complain that it is no longer free trade.

What better example do we need than the softwood lumber issue, where we had free trade? There was free trade in softwood lumber, but because our stumpage fees were too low, the Americans said: "That is not acceptable. You cannot have that level of stumpage fees." It did not matter to the Americans that the government wanted those stumpage fees at that level for either reforestation or regional development purposes. That did not mean a thing. It was just that the stumpage fees were too low to satisfy what our major trading partner felt was a fair agreement.

It did not matter. We now have no control over stumpage fees in the province. It does not matter that we want those fees set at that level for regional development purposes. I would suggest to the Treasurer that from this point on, every time this province wants to engage in a major regional development program, such as for northern Ontario or for eastern Ontario, it is going to run into flak because of the precedent that has been set.

We clearly lost that dispute on the softwood lumber issue. The government knew that it was done. They knew we had lost. They agreed to it, because they knew they could not sustain the

argument of those kinds of stumpage fees under a free trade arrangement.

We disagree with free trade for Ontario because there are implications for both jobs and sovereignty in any free trade arrangement and we would lose on both counts. We would pay a price in terms of our ability to chart our own economic future and, in particular, in our ability to implement regional development policies. As someone who lives and works in northern Ontario, that bothers me a great deal.

We in this party are more optimistic about our ability to build our economy the way Canadians want it rather than simply acquiescing to market forces dominated by another sovereign state. We believe we can negotiate sectoral agreements and work with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, while at the same time targeting particular sectors which we would build and, if necessary, protect.

New Democrats believe in and will fight for the growth of both real wealth and jobs, through a policy designed to replace selective imports. We know we must be careful. We also know that our history of reliance on raw resources must change. We know that for every job we create through resource extraction, we export four jobs to the nation that receives and processes that resource.

We have the domestic market necessary to build industries that will go a long way towards replacing some of the imports that currently flood our market. We do not need to import such a preponderance of our machinery, appliances, electronics and computer equipment, to name just a few sectors.

A few examples will make the point. I selected these somewhat arbitrarily, but they are sectors where there is a substantial domestic market, where there is potential for growth and where there is very high import penetration.

Under hardware, tools and cutlery, we have a \$650-million import bill. If we replaced even 25 per cent of that, we would create 1,600 jobs in Ontario. Machinery and equipment: 60 per cent of the market is represented by imports; 25 per cent of that market would mean 12,000 jobs in Ontario.

In electrical and electronic products, the biggest of which, by the way, are computers and computer parts, we have a deficit of over \$2 billion. Small electronic appliances: 56 per cent of the market is represented by imports; 25 per cent of that would mean over 1,200 jobs.

Household radios and televisions: 77 per cent of the market is imports. Office and store machinery: a deficit of over \$3 billion; 5,800 jobs

if we were to replace a quarter of those imports. Finally, instruments and related products: a deficit of \$2 billion; we could create over 10,000 jobs if we replaced 25 per cent of those imports.

What we have done is select some sectors, a very arbitrary number of sectors, and said: "We have large imports in these sectors. We have a large domestic market. It is worth attempting to build up the Canadian market in Ontario to replace at least some of those imports." We are not suggesting all of them—we know that is not realistic—but we are saying that there is a large domestic market, that there are large imports and that there is potential for growth. They are high-growth industries. We believe it is not appropriate for a government to ignore that.

The alternative option to this is free trade. That is exactly what Mr. Macdonald meant when he said, "We must opt for a planned economy or free trade." We are saying this is the kind of planned economy where you select sectors and decide that you are going to build those sectors in order to create jobs and have more control over the future of your own economy. We feel very strongly about that and think the government is simply taking the path of least resistance by going the free trade route.

Finally, on that matter I would ask the Treasurer to keep in mind the whole question of regional development, because I do not know how we are ever going to engage in serious regional development in the province under a free trade arrangement. If the softwood lumber dispute means anything, that should be all the example the Treasurer needs.

I would be remiss if I did not talk about the environment. I think the Treasurer has ignored the enormous potential of the environment in the whole area of the economy, the relationship between the economy and the environment. I feel very strongly that the mugs have had their day in counterpoising the environment to jobs. It is time that day was ended; it is time that dispute was put to rest.

We often hear, "You cannot have jobs and a clean environment." We believe the opposite is true. Environmental regulation not only reduces pollution; it also creates jobs. Pollution control has the potential to be a major sales-generating, profit-making, job-creating industry. However, in Ontario, the industry has not developed as successfully as it should have because of lack of government direction.

For example, Ontario Hydro was on the verge of developing viable scrubbers for its coal-fired generating stations to reduce acid gas emissions

in the late 1970s, but the research was curtailed when it became evident that Hydro would not be forced to install pollution abatement equipment, and that is too bad.

There are no regulated air standards or water standards, so large companies have been able to avoid major expenditures on pollution abatement equipment. Disposing of municipal and industrial waste in the province's 3,400 landfill sites has been the cheapest and easiest solution for years. The lack of stringent regulations on landfill sites has resulted in inadequate disposal of hazardous wastes and a legacy of leaking landfill sites.

The government claims to care about the environment, yet its reluctance to properly fund environmental initiatives tells another story. When inflation is taken into account, the Liberals actually spent less on the environment than the previous government spent in 1981-82 at the peak of its environmental spending.

Isn't it strange, Mr. Speaker: two areas where the Liberals have been making so much noise, so much hype; education and the environment, and in both cases, they spent less than their predecessors did. That says something about substance.

1600

The funding of the Ministry of the Environment must be increased and the ministry must tighten up environmental regulations. Otherwise, the quality of our environment can deteriorate even further and jobs can actually disappear as a result of this neglect. Jobs in tourism, commercial and sports fishing, forestry and agriculture are all vulnerable areas that have been affected by air and water pollution. We are determined that we will continue to fight for a much-improved environment.

I am glad the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has walked into the chamber as I am speaking, because he should understand that his commitment to the environment does not even match the commitment of the previous government. So much for all the hype about the Minister of the Environment and his clout in the Liberal cabinet.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: It was alleged by the member for Nickel Belt that I was not delivering the same as the previous government or something. I was just wondering whether he had read the story that says Ontario is number one and Manitoba is number 10 in the environment.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order. This is not a point of privilege.

Mr. Laughren: Mr. Speaker, I am sure you want me to ignore the Minister of the Environment's self-serving rhetoric, because that is all it is.

We believe there needs to be an increased commitment to municipal recycling. The last time I read his numbers, the Minister of the Environment was going to spend something like \$4 million.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: That has been quintupled.

Mr. Laughren: It is still a pittance to the Minister of the Environment. We believe there should be the creation of an agency responsible for the reduction and recovery of industrial waste. The Ontario Waste Management Corp. has concentrated its budget and its energy on finding an appropriate site for a major waste disposal facility. Less than one per cent of its budget is devoted to the elimination of waste through industrial process changes.

The creation of a provincial superfund, and oh, how eloquent my colleague the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) has been on this one—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I have led the way in promoting the federal one. That is what we need so that there is no pollution haven. You know that; your leader knows that—no pollution havens.

Mr. Laughren: We believe there should be a superfund that would be used to provide money for testing and remedial work on the province's abandoned dump sites, many of which pose a hazard to human health.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: We have an environmental security fund.

Mr. Laughren: The minister does not have enough in that fund to pay to clean up the Lees Avenue site in Ottawa and he knows it.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr. Laughren: He does not even have enough to clean up one site—not one.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: We have contributed \$5.5 million.

The Acting Speaker: Would you please ignore the interjections of the minister?

Mr. Laughren: No, I cannot ignore him until he shuts up.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Please continue.

Mr. Laughren: I want to conclude my comments on the environment by saying it is a win-win-win situation. Cleaning up the environ-

ment creates new jobs; it protects existing jobs; and it protects the environment.

The Minister of the Environment has a very good public relations component in his ministry, but it is simply all words. It is like their commitment to education. It is not there. All that is there is the words and the hype. That is all that is there.

I must say a few words on agriculture. If I did not, my colleague the member for Essex North (Mr. Hayes), who is a good friend of mine, would never speak to me again. Besides that, there is a lot of hype about agriculture too.

People thought that with the member for Huron-Middlesex (Mr. Riddell) as the Minister of Agriculture and Food, all the farmers in the province would be happy. That simply has not worked out. I would say that a couple of good things have happened in the field of agriculture; for example, the increase from 60 per cent to 100 per cent for the tax rebate. We are pleased with that.

But I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that all the programs which are of assistance to farmers—we are not denying that—do not address the basic problem of low farm incomes. There is no overall policy directed towards the survival of the family farm in Ontario. There is no overall policy. There is no response to the long-standing problem of increasing differentials between the farm gate and retail price levels.

It is very nice to be able to say, "Here is some assistance for farmers." If my colleague from Essex North were here he would say it much more eloquently than I, but he would tell the members that it is very nice to say to a farmer, "Here is some money to help you fix up your tractors." But what good is a fixed-up tractor, a tuned-up tractor, a beautifully, finely-tuned tractor, if he has no land on which to work it? The government still has not come forward with a long-term program that helps, that is designed solely to maintain the family farm in the province.

I would like to spend a couple of moments on northern Ontario. If there is one area where the government has hyped up the population, it is in the north. It is truly incredible the way the Premier has talked and the way the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) has talked across the north.

As a matter of fact, so seductive has been the Premier's hype and that of the member for Cochrane North that, my goodness, they even seduced the resolute character and commitment of the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay).

Imagine that. I ask the members, surely there is no other reason the member for Timiskaming would now be sitting as a Liberal if it were not for the Liberals' commitment to northern Ontario. What other reason could there be, given his resolute character and commitment to cause? Surely there is no other reason.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be very difficult for Liberal candidates all across the north to take this budget and sell it. There are a lot of Liberal candidates who are going to have to work a lot harder than they thought they were going to have to work. As a matter of fact, to be fair, I think the Liberals should reopen all nominations across northern Ontario because Liberal candidates were deceived into thinking there would be some good northern policy this time.

It is not there. Let me be very specific. This budget promised \$30 million for the heritage fund—out of a budget of over \$30 billion, less than one per cent. That is going to turn around—

Mr. Morin-Strom: One tenth of one per cent.

Mr. Laughren: One tenth of one per cent, that is going to—thank goodness for the odd doctorate in mathematics.

Mr. Barlow: It is not nice to call him the "odd" doctor.

Mr. Laughren: He is not that odd, Mr. Speaker. I will take that back. But, when we think about it, we have an economy in northern Ontario where the unemployment rate is twice as high as it is for the rest of the province, in southern Ontario, particularly the Golden Horseshoe. The government says, "Well, we've got \$30 million. We'll set up a fund."

There is no indication as to how it is going to be spent. There is no indication of anything. They are just going to set that money aside, \$30 million.

Now the Treasurer might want us to believe that \$30 million is substantial. I talked a few minutes ago about the whole question of the softwood lumber tax. Guess what the softwood lumber tax is going to take out of northern Ontario? Are there any guesses? How much will the softwood lumber tax take out of northern Ontario?

Mr. Warner: It will be \$30 million.

Mr. Laughren: I hear \$30 million from the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner). That is very close to the truth, very close to being accurate. There will be \$30 million taken out of the north from the softwood lumber. How much put back into the heritage fund?

Mr. Warner: Thirty million.

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Mr. Laughren: The member was listening; \$30 million. So what do we have? Nothing, no money for the north through the heritage fund. It is just replacing what they have already agreed to take out. Do they think that is going to sell in northern Ontario? They've got to be kidding. Thirty million dollars in the heritage fund.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: We are spending lots of money on sewers and waterworks.

Mr. Laughren: Oh yes, but just a minute now. Every Liberal candidate in the north, the member for Cochrane North, and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) have been talking about roads, an improved transportation system for northern Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Sewers.

Mr. Laughren: No, that is not what they are selling across the north. The Minister of the Environment should occasionally go to northern Ontario and hear what the Liberal candidates are saying up there about new roads: "We are going to four-lane this highway, four-lane that one, build a new highway here, a new highway there. It is going to be a new era in transportation." They have even got the chambers of commerce all cranked up on it.

I want to tell them that they are not going to deliver it with \$26 million in new money for roads. We phoned a couple of municipal engineers in northern Ontario and their best estimates are that if you are building urban roads, it is about \$1 million a mile; if you get out into where there is a lot of rock, which there is in northern Ontario, it is closer to \$2 million a mile.

That is why I asked the Premier the other day, "Where are the 13 miles of new roads going to go?" We will even give the government 20 miles; that is all it will build. And we are supposed to be excited and grateful about the Liberal commitment to roads in northern Ontario? They are going to be laughed out of town, \$26 million in new roads.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There is \$106 million for new roads.

Mr. Laughren: New money, \$26 million. It is in the Treasurer's own budget.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Are you afraid to spend old money?

Mr. Laughren: No, it is not there. That is why the Treasurer cannot spend it.

The Treasurer does not like to be chided. The Premier did not like to be chided about this aspect

of the budget. He particularly did not like when I compared it to funding in Toronto. Does he think the people up north will like it when they see \$30 million of public money going to the domed stadium and \$30 million to the heritage fund for the north, \$26 million in new roads in northern Ontario and \$130 million in new roads in Metro Toronto alone? They are not going to buy that. That is not a commitment. It is the same old colonial mentality that the previous government had to northern Ontario; nothing more, nothing less. That is all it is.

The Premier said, "I find it unfortunate that you will be setting north against south." It was the Treasurer who put up those amounts of money. It is not a case of putting the north against the south. What a silly accusation. The Treasurer said, "We are going to put \$30 million in the north and \$30 million in the domed stadium," not me. If he does not like those comparisons, let him change the numbers. It is a lot of nonsense. It is not a commitment to northern Ontario at all.

Once again, all the hype on education, all the hype on the environment, all the hype on northern Ontario, and what has the government got? No substance whatsoever.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: A 16 per cent increase on the environment.

Mr. Laughren: The Minister of the Environment is nattering a lot. Perhaps he could rise in his place at the proper time and tell us how come he is spending less on the environment than the Tories did in their heyday.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: We are not.

Mr. Laughren: Yes, he is.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: This is an all-time high.

Mr. Laughren: No, it is not an all-time high. Not in real dollars, it is not. Absolutely not.

All the hype about what the Liberals are doing across the province serves them well in the short term; in the long term it will come back to haunt them. People in the north will remember all those promises, people in education will remember all those promises, people in the environment will remember all the hype around the Minister of the Environment. It is simply not there. They are not delivering.

What we have said to the Treasurer on a number of occasions is, "Here are some new sources of money that would make it a fairer tax system and allow you to do things that we are suggesting should be done."

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Laughren: Perhaps the Minister of the Environment is referring to the fact—well, I will not get into a debate with the Minister of the Environment.

Anyway, in conclusion, let me just say that we believe that a provincial budget is an intriguing challenge, whether preparing it or responding to it, and this one must have been fun as well as challenging. This budget was an opportunity, the first real one for this government, to wipe out the accumulated and institutionalized biases of 42 years of Tory rule. In that regard, this budget has failed.

This budget was an opportunity to make—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: He is choking on his words.

Mr. Laughren: No, I am running out of gas, and at the prices I pay for gas, I cannot afford to do that.

This budget was an opportunity to make the mask of civility, as represented by the throne speech, a permanent feature in Ontario. In that regard, by failing to adequately address the question of the fairness of our tax system, this budget has failed.

This budget was an opportunity to stake out an independent position on the trade negotiations. It failed to do that.

This budget was an opportunity to show Ontario that this province has an economic game plan other than one designed to maintain the status quo. It did not do that.

This budget was an opportunity to show northern Ontario that the old colonial mentality towards northern Ontario was gone and that the north was to become an integral and inseparable part of a new and prosperous Ontario. It failed to do that.

This budget presented this government with an opportunity to remove the various mean-spirited policies that discriminate against our poor, our disabled and our homeless. It failed to do that.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Is this a no-confidence motion?

Mr. Laughren: We will not move a motion of no-confidence in this budget, because we promised we would not do so when the accord was signed in June 1985. That does not mean we are satisfied; it simply means we are honouring our commitment. We are serving notice that we will be fighting for the people left out in the Treasurer's plan. We know that, given similar revenues, the old Tory government would have brought down a virtually identical budget.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the Treasurer's vision of Ontario is different from ours. He wants

an Ontario that wears a mask of civility but whose behaviour remains autocratic, exclusive and unfair. We believe that in Ontario we have been blessed with all the tools necessary to build a society that is the envy of the western world, a society that challenges the young and the swift while embracing those who are neither.

Mr. Bossy: It is a great pleasure for me to stand in the Legislature this afternoon and make a few remarks on the budget. I have never abused the privilege of speaking in this House and I do not intend to do that today. But I cannot help but share a few of my thoughts on the budget, because I have heard some cynical comments made about it in this House.

Let us look at why there is such tremendous content in this budget. We hear comments in this House that we, as a government, are trying to reach out and touch every person in this province. I think it is about time the government recognized all the problems that exist in this province. It is not good enough to address just a few. We have to remember that every person in this province should be treated equally, whether he lives in the north or in the south.

1620

It must be very hard for the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) to look at this document and see all those things that may have been neglected in the past, just as in the throne speech debate he attacked this government, on the one hand, for addressing too many problems and, on the other hand, for not doing enough.

Ontario is currently enjoying a period of sustained economic growth. For example, during the last two years, there were 312,000 new jobs created in this province, and the unemployment rate has fallen to 6.9 per cent. That is the lowest in Canada. Now the government of Ontario can address some of the chronic underfunding that has so diminished many of our institutions.

I would say that this particular budget of \$35 billion could be regarded as an indictment against former governments for having neglected many of the areas of concern. This budget funds essential social and economic priorities in education, health, housing, child care, transportation and high technology. I am sure the opposition could not say all is well in education. I am sure they could not say all is well in housing. They could not say all is well in agriculture nor could they say all is well for the seniors in this province.

Would they stand in their places and say the health care system is everything it should be and that the hospitals have been adequately funded?

Have they travelled beyond Toronto and seen the conditions of our roads and highways? Have they been to the municipalities to hear at first hand how funding has been desperately needed for the infrastructures of their municipalities? Do they say working mothers should not have day care?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How is Highway 401 near Chatham?

Mr. Bossy: Rough.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: What are you doing about it?

Mr. Bossy: I am sure the opposition could, upon reflection, acknowledge that this budget is, in fact, a real indication that this government is not afraid of confronting the issues of the day and that it is doing something about them.

I want to speak briefly on what we inherited when we assumed responsibility back in June 1985. We inherited a \$2-billion budgetary deficit. With this budget, we have brought the budget below the \$1-billion barrier for the first time in seven years.

But we have to look a little further to find other kinds of deficits; for instance, education. There were tremendous cries for more money, because underfunding was so extreme. The capital budget for schools is set at \$147 million this year and \$226 million for next year.

We must consider agriculture. That was totally neglected. One can just ask the farmers in this province what kind of financial difficulties we really inherited. In terms of agriculture, Ontario was recognized as the most poorly funded province in Canada. We have added 72 per cent more funding to the agricultural sector. As part of the total funding of \$563 million, there is a \$40-million land stewardship program that encourages sound land management and environmental protection. The budget replaces the current 60 per cent rebate on farm property with a 100 per cent rebate. As well, it eliminates the current requirement to prepay property taxes. We will continue to do our duty when it comes to the business of farming.

What kind of a deficit did we inherit in the housing sector? We should consider that in June 1985 the situation in Chatham and area was a 0.1 per cent vacancy rate with no new housing under way. I can assure the members that is no longer the case. Total funding for the Ministry of Housing will increase by 34 per cent in 1987-88. This government is putting money where its mouth is. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Housing, I take great pride in the fact that the next phase of the assured housing

strategy will provide a further \$220 million for construction of more affordable rental housing.

What kind of a deficit did we inherit in the health care system? With this budget we are addressing that. We are spending about \$1,200 annually for each of the Ontario residents. As well, additional funding this year will improve the quality of care in nursing homes.

Yet another deficit which we inherited is the need we now have to provide top quality child care in this province. This government is responding by raising the government's total child care commitment to \$184 million.

If we consider all the roads that need repair and the work on the infrastructure that must be completed by the municipalities, this government has responded by increasing municipal road grants by 9.5 per cent this year.

As of June 1, the retail sales tax exemption for prepared meals will be raised from \$2 to \$4. Gone are the days of the tax on hamburgers, franks and fries put in by the then Treasurer, the member for Muskoka.

With this budget, this government has identified the areas of neglect and has set forth how this government is responding and will continue to respond to these issues. No longer will a government in Ontario have its ideas come only from Toronto. It is well known that previous leaders in this province had a vision extending only from the CN Tower. It would appear that they would climb the tower on a clear day and what they could see, that was their Ontario.

Our vision, as expressed through this budget, is that everyone in this great province is going to be recognized and have his concerns dealt with. We on this side of the House are guided by the principle that the government that governs best is the government that reaches out to the greatest number of its people.

I very much appreciate what the Leader of the Opposition and the members of his party are doing as they travel throughout this province. It would appear they are saying to everyone within shouting distance, "Get your applications in fast because there is a lot of money in the government coffers and you might as well get your share." In other words, the opposition has realized it is only a Liberal government that will take care of those needs.

Consequently, this budget outlines the areas neglected in the past. I believe it begs the question, why was nothing done about these deficit problems before now? I can tell the members why those needs were not taken care of

before now. It is because the priorities of the previous governments were out of line.

I can remember very well only a few years ago when the schools badly needed capital funding but the priority of the government of the day was to buy part of Suncor. We also knew at that time that hospitals needed a tremendous amount of funding to expand and modernize but the priority of the day was to expand and modernize Minaki Lodge. We can also remember very well that the agriculture sector was crying out for help but the government of the day was more interested in considering buying a new jet for the Premier at the time.

1630

I cannot let this opportunity pass to speak about the third party in this House. Much has been said and written about the accord signed two years ago and how our colleagues across the way seem to have more influence on government policy than their numbers would merit. When it comes to worker safety and social legislation, the third party has no monopoly on compassion.

Mr. McClellan: That is what the Tories always used to say.

Mr. Bossy: Yes, indeed, every member of this Legislature has at least as much concern for these issues as does the third party. We know how they would solve a problem. We need only look at the car insurance issue as a prime example. The third party says it can only be controlled by state takeover. That is their solution because they have no faith in the free enterprise system.

Let us not dwell on the past because the budget deals more with the future. The people of this province now have experienced what good government is all about. This is a government that gets its priorities right. As the government for almost two years now, we have delivered on many of the issues that are of major concern to the people of Ontario.

Consider my riding of Chatham-Kent as a shining example. The citizens in Wallaceburg and Dresden now have a commitment for a pipeline that will provide drinking water from Lake Huron, a \$22-million pipeline that will be constructed as a result of a commitment of \$16.5 million of that cost. This has all occurred in less than a year, after they had pleaded with the former government for over nine years to obtain a pipeline for their drinking water.

The people in the city of Chatham for many years looked to have their Thames River project taken care of. Within less than a year, a commitment was made by this government for funding to carry this worthwhile project through

to completion. I welcome anyone to visit Chatham and see this great project in progress.

Let us talk about education. In my riding, to further the upgrading of skills for the work force, so important in this new technological age, this government has established the computer-aided design and manufacturing centre at the Thames campus of St. Clair College in Chatham. In addition, for the retraining of older workers who have been laid off, the budget sets aside \$5 million this year and \$14 million next year to help them adapt to changing technologies.

We can also look at what was announced recently by the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway). Over \$2 million will be going to the Kent County Board of Education, money it has required for a long time. Many of our schools in the county have leaking roofs and others need to expand. These were all items on the board's agenda for the last eight years. While recognizing that much more needs to be done, we have made much progress in that area.

We are all aware of the vital leadership role played by my colleague the Minister of the Environment. We heard his statement today in the House. He has attacked the serious problems of the environment in a very responsible way. We all want clean water to drink and clean beaches and clean lakes where our children and grandchildren can swim comfortably.

Ontario is recognized as a leader in North America for protecting our environment in that it brings in pollution laws and takes leadership. As members can plainly see, this government has shown it is not afraid to confront the major issues and develop some workable solutions. To this end, the government has earmarked \$418 million for 1987-88 or a 16 per cent increase over last year. That is taking care of the environment.

Building on the initiatives set out in the last two throne speeches, the government of Ontario will continue to provide open and fair government. This government, led by the Premier, will provide the sensitive, responsive leadership required to see the fulfilment of this agenda.

It will take a strong, decisive government to accomplish this. I think the people of Ontario are recognizing that there is indeed real leadership in Ontario that is ready, willing and able to tackle all these major issues outlined in the budget. With the reading of the speech from the throne and with this budget, the Ontario government has gone boldly where no government has gone before to ensure that our province takes its place as a world-class society.

To summarize, this budget cuts taxes to the tune of almost \$250 million, primarily for the elderly and the poor. We are delivering needed assistance to our agricultural community and funding the essential priorities of education, health, housing, child care, transportation and high technology. We are doing all this while bringing the deficit down to \$980 million, the lowest in seven years.

If we accept what the polls are saying today, the people of Ontario recognize that they have new leadership and are happy about it. When it comes to election time, will the voters of Ontario choose the leader of the third party (Mr. Rae), the Leader of the Opposition or the leadership of the Premier? They know the kind of leadership they are getting and they deserve the best. I am confident that the voters will make the right choice. I take great pleasure in supporting this budget as an excellent agenda for the future.

1640

Mr. McFadden: I am very pleased to have this opportunity to rise to speak about the budget introduced by the Treasurer last week. I notice that on the front cover, the trillium there is a red colour. My understanding is that when they originally went to take this picture, it actually was a white trillium, but when the trillium found out it was going to wind up on the cover of this document it turned red with embarrassment; poor trillium.

Like the speech from the throne, the budget presented by the Treasurer is full of high-sounding rhetoric that effectively does or says very little. Much has been made of the fact that there are no tax increases contained in this budget, but that particular claim is much ado about nothing because over the past two years the Treasurer has raised taxes on virtually everything in Ontario. We have had increases in personal income taxes, corporation taxes, tobacco taxes, retail sales tax and the land transfer tax. Over the past two years, the Treasurer has in effect put the touch on everyone and everything going in Ontario. To hear now that there have been no tax increases is really to talk about very little after the range of tax increases the people of Ontario have suffered since this government came to power in June 1985.

What has the current government meant? Total provincial government tax revenue over the past couple of years has gone up by some 48 per cent. Figures indicate that revenue from personal income taxes has increased over the past three budgets by almost 60 per cent. Provincial government spending has increased by 30 per

cent. If we look back over the past three budgets that have been introduced by the current government, we see an annual rate of increase of 10 per cent in government spending when the inflation rate increased during that period by an annual rate of only 4.1 per cent.

During the prebudget hearings of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, we heard from one group after another urging that the provincial deficit be reduced and eliminated during this current period of economic growth so that our province would be in good, sound financial shape to face the next economic recession, which is inevitably going to occur some time next year or in the next two or three years. The C. D. Howe Institute, the Conference Board of Canada, the boards of trade, the chambers of commerce and the individual corporations that appeared before the committee all gave the committee the same advice. I know the Treasurer received the same advice from the various organizations that appeared before our committee, yet what do we have? At a time of unprecedented economic growth we still show a deficit of approximately \$1 billion.

In economic circumstances where the provincial government could have started to make a dent in the total provincial debt, we have seen a steady increase in the amount of the provincial debt. The total provincial debt has jumped by close to \$5 billion over the past two years, and as I have mentioned, will go up by another \$1 billion over the next year. If we take a look at the actual figures in the budget, we see that in fiscal year 1984-85, the total debt was \$30,041,000,000; in 1985-86, it went up to \$32,904,000,000; in 1986-87, it was \$35,066,000,000, and the projection for the coming year is \$37 billion.

In a time of real economic growth within our economy, albeit not in every area of Ontario, the government is in effect failing to put anything away for a rainy day. What is happening through this budget and through the previous two budgets of this Treasurer is that we are leaving Ontario in a poor position to face any recession we might have in the years to come.

When we look at what economists are projecting in Ontario, in Canada and in the United States, the expectation is that we will be facing a slowdown in the automotive industry. That is already starting. We are facing potential slowdowns in a number of our other key industries. Yet where are we? In this period of economic growth, our debt is rising. It is very unfortunate that in effect, what we have been

seeing during the past two years is an increase in provincial debt that will net out by the end of the current fiscal year to some \$7 billion.

I would like to deal with several specific items in the budget that concern me. The first area relates to international trade. This was commented on by my friend the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren). Our provincial economy, the standard of living in this province and the jobs of hundreds of thousands of Ontarians depend on international trade. In fact, almost one job in three in Ontario depends on exports to the United States, according to figures provided by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology.

Yet when we look at the budget on page 18, what do we find? There is a section entitled "Canada-US Trade Negotiations," and that particular section in relation to Canada-US trade merits only three brief sentences. I suggest that the budget and that reference do not reflect the vital importance of the current Canada-US trade talks. Nor does it reflect the tremendous danger posed to hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario by the omnibus trade legislation now before the United States Congress. There are no proposals set out in this budget to assist Ontario business and workers if we fail to secure a trade agreement with the United States or if we find ourselves facing the full force of the current restrictive American trade legislation.

The Premier likes to go around and talk about the development of other world markets outside North America. Our party endorses that. It is urgent that Ontario develop markets in addition to the very large market it currently enjoys in the United States. The Premier talks about developing markets in Europe or perhaps in Asia or Latin America, but there is not one reference whatsoever in this budget to that kind of trade initiative; not a reference to it. This is a tremendous omission in view of current developments in the United States and in view of the tremendous dependence the Ontario economy has on international trade.

What this government from the Premier on down prefers to do is a lot of handwringing and sermonizing in public, but when one gets behind it, when one looks at the proposals in this budget, what one sees is a government that is singularly lacking in any policy ideas, initiatives or direction with regard to such a vital area as international trade.

The standing committee on finance and economic affairs, which conducted a number of weeks of hearings to secure the input of concerned groups about what should be included

in the budget, made a number of interesting recommendations. The committee's report was submitted to the Treasurer in April and I would like to deal with a couple of those recommendations.

One of the recommendations that I thought was particularly worth while was a recommendation that the provincial government should monitor the impact of government legislation, taxes and programs on Ontario competitiveness. The particular recommendation I am referring to is recommendation 6, which reads as follows: "The government should give consideration to the development of a program specifically for the purpose of monitoring, on a continuous basis, the socioeconomic impact of new policies and legislation on the people and economy of the province. The program objectives would be to detect both the potentially negative impact of government actions and beneficial results with regard to the viability of the economy in the domestic and international markets."

1650

That particular proposal is one that was endorsed by the representatives of all three parties on the committee and, I think, is a well-thought-out, original and much-needed idea. But what do we find in the budget? Not a single reference to that proposal, either for or against. Small wonder. Year after year, government grows larger. We have seen that over the past two years the total size of the civil service, as contained in the figures in this budget, has gone up by over 4,000.

Year after year, the costs of government go up. Year after year, more regulations are passed. Some of these programs are needed. Some of these regulations are needed. But the fact is that in many cases the various programs and concepts of government simply put in place a whole range of costs for industry in the form of additional red tape, taxes, charges and other burdens.

Since so much of our income and so many of our jobs in this province depend directly on our ability to sell our products and services abroad, government has an obligation to monitor its impact on our economy and on the competitiveness of our industry. Government should be a help, not a burden, to our industry. Government should be a help and not an encumbrance on the ability of our province to compete in the world.

Yet what do we find? There is absolutely no indication in this budget of this kind of policy thrust. In fact, I would suggest that this budget seems to have been written in a vacuum, without

recognizing the kind of pressures faced by Ontario industry.

Another key recommendation of the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs which has been entirely ignored by the budget was the recommendation that the provincial government's share of total provincial education spending should be increased to 60 per cent. The committee also recommended that property taxes should be reduced as the provincial share rises.

I would like to quote from the standing committee's report. It on page 6 of the report, point 5. It reads as follows: "The government should increase, in a phased program, its share of funding to elementary and secondary education to 60 per cent of total expenditures, and property tax should be proportionately decreased through an appropriate tax mechanism. The committee is of the opinion that property tax is not the most appropriate basis for education revenue. A formula is required to ensure that the taxpayer benefits directly from the increased role to be assumed by the province."

Property taxes are not based on the ability to pay and should not be used as the basis to fund the lion's share of education costs. Last November in this House, a resolution endorsing property tax reform to reduce the burden of taxation on home owners and tenants, which I submitted, was adopted unanimously by this assembly.

This budget makes no mention at all of this kind of policy direction. It offers no relief whatsoever to the hard-pressed property taxpayer. In fact, if you take a look at the lack of this mention, with the amount of money being proposed for spending on education, it is fairly clear that the province has what I could only describe as a relatively lukewarm commitment to education, in spite of all the rhetoric in the speech from the throne.

This is most clearly shown in the share which education will now have of the provincial budget. Education's share in the budget introduced for the coming year by the Treasurer last week has dropped from 13.2 per cent in the last fiscal year to 12.3 per cent in the current fiscal year. The net effect of this budget, I would suggest, is to shift more of the burden of education costs to property taxes. I would suggest this is wrong for education, but it is also unfair, since the property tax is essentially a regressive tax which does not reflect the taxpayer's ability to pay.

I would have hoped that the Treasurer could have shown the kind of leadership proposed by

the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, and supported by witness after witness before the committee, to commit in his budget to increase over time the province's share of education spending to 60 per cent, while at the same time reducing property taxes across Ontario. The Treasurer failed to make this kind of commitment, and in so doing, I would suggest, he has failed the education system and the property taxpayers throughout Ontario.

On page 1 of the budget, the Treasurer acknowledged the contribution made by the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I think it was nice of the Treasurer to acknowledge the work of the committee and the commitment shown by members of the committee over a number of months in looking at the financial projections of the province, hearing witnesses and then making its recommendations on what the committee hoped would be included in this budget.

It would have been better if, besides an acknowledgement, at least some of the key recommendations in the committee's report had been specifically acted upon.

I strongly endorse the suggestion made by the Treasurer in his previous budget to create the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I think it was a welcome development for Ontario to provide an opportunity for members of this House and for the general public to play a larger role in the whole consultation process leading up to the eventual preparation of the budget. I think this was a very valid and a very valuable initiative proposed by the Treasurer.

However, the problem is that the standing committee on finance and economic affairs has been hamstrung from the start by the lack of time it was allocated to do the kind of job it has been asked to do. In the regular programming of this Legislature, the standing committee is allocated only two hours every Thursday morning, and they also happen to be the only two hours provided in the House agenda for private members' business.

As a result of the time allocation provided to the committee, both towards the tail-end of the last session and during the break in the late winter and spring, the budget consultation process, which was a hallmark of this committee, effectively took place over only a brief three-week period in late March and early April—hardly enough time to get into the kinds of important issues facing this province.

I would suggest that if the entire public hearing process and the entire consultation process of the standing committee is to have any relevance at all in budget-making, and if this entire process is to be anything other than political window-dressing, the committee will have to be provided with adequate time in late fall and early winter to hold hearings, to do the necessary research and then to prepare its report.

I understand this was only the first year for this committee. Members of the committee have learned a great deal, but things must be improved considerably if the committee is to make the kind of valuable contribution and serve the purpose it could have for the people of this province.

[Applause]

Mr. McFadden: I appreciate the applause by the Treasurer on that, and I am hopeful that indicates he intends to see the committee can function in the years ahead in a somewhat more effective manner as, in many ways, this committee was his brain-child and he was the father of it. We are looking forward to growing up in a more fertile environment than we have over the past year.

In summary, this government, through its budget, appears to lack any imagination in terms of future planning, any effective energy in terms of what it is going to do, and any real insight into the problems facing Ontario. It is my view that this is a relatively self-satisfied and self-congratulatory kind of document, which does not respond to the kinds of challenges facing this province today and the kinds of challenges which our province is inevitably going to be facing as we head to the end of the 1980s and on into the 1990s.

Mr. Mackenzie: The budget, like the throne speech, was, as far as I was concerned, a bit of a disappointment. I can recall many discussions—the Treasurer may even have taken part in a few—during a plant closure committee of some years ago, of the fact that some countries had a policy of using the tax system and sometimes extracting additional taxes when things were going relatively well so they could put themselves in a position to help people a little more when things were not that rosy. There was certainly nothing of that in this particular budget.

We had no ordering of priorities for the coming year by the Liberal government; certainly nothing as specific, whether they liked it or not, as the accord, which they had to give them some direction for the last two years, and for which we do not hesitate to claim some small credit.

It seems to me to be an attempt to touch most bases and constituency groups in Ontario with a little largess and more vague promises—sort of a grab-bag for possible electoral purposes, but in that respect it may fall far short of what the Premier was expecting—with no clear, positive and progressive directions in it, and certainly no exciting new or progressive initiatives for the people of Ontario.

I get the impression that the government really has opted for quantity, a lot of little bits, but certainly not for quality and direction in the future of Ontario. In my opinion, it is clearly time that we replace a blind faith on economic growth and development with a policy that stresses a little more the quality of life in Ontario. I think the government should understand, as most of us are beginning to, that there are just as many jobs to be produced in an approach that stresses the quality of life as there are in growth for growth's sake or economic development.

To me, to many New Democrats and to many of my constituents, the direction the government of Ontario should be taking is clear. I am not going to try to cover all of the areas that are of concern to me, but I do want to outline just a few of the issues.

We can start with something that the public has finally cottoned to in the province of Ontario, and that is the issue of taxes and tax fairness. The members should take a look at where the taxes come from. We have some fairness in personal income taxes, but when you look at Ontario and see \$8.6 billion income from personal income taxes, look more closely and see how that has been increasing consistently and then take a look at the retail sales tax—which nobody has ever said is a progressive tax—and see that we are going to get \$5.6 billion from that tax, and then you take a look at corporation taxes—and there are enough loopholes to drive the proverbial Mack truck through—and see \$3.1 billion, you begin to wonder who is paying the bill.

Gasoline taxes, tobacco taxes and Ontario health insurance plan premiums are all items that are not progressive taxes. They all bring in sizeable amounts of income to the province of Ontario. It does raise some serious questions as to whether we are going in any tax-fairness direction whatsoever.

I find it difficult to accept. For example, back in 1966 personal income tax in Ontario accounted for 64.5 per cent, whereas corporate taxes were 35.5 per cent. In spite of the growth of business, the huge corporations in our province and the wealth that is here, in 1987 we see

personal tax has gone from 64.5 per cent to 72.9 per cent in terms of the income of the province. Corporate taxes have gone from 35.5 per cent to 27.1 per cent. I have to ask the question of whether that is a proper direction for the tax structure in Ontario to go.

In 1983, there were 79,196 corporations reporting positive book profits of \$13.3 billion that paid no taxes. Some 40 per cent of those corporations were in Ontario. That certainly does not seem to be moving towards a fair tax system. We have serious questions about why there are no succession duties. The use or the elimination of capital gains, which the Treasurer himself has indicated concern with, leaves a tremendous loophole. As my colleague said earlier, the only argument we really used to get against that was the family farm. This party has made it clear that, to get around that particular loophole, it would be willing to see a mechanism to pass on the family farm.

Real estate speculation tax: I think, with what is happening to property values today, it is obvious in the percentage of purchases in almost all of our cities that properties have been picked up by speculators. In my own family there is a case in point. My married daughter bought a house for \$40-odd thousand just seven years ago. She can sell that house for \$160,000 or \$170,000 today. In their case they have put it into another house, a bigger and an upgrading house. I know a number of people who have bought houses like that in my town who are hanging on to them or are selling them, with no intention of using them for themselves or their families but for the speculative value. They can turn over a very big buck very quickly. It seems to me that speculation taxes were certainly in order in the housing field in this particular budget. We did not see the Treasurer trying to move in this way at all.

My colleague the member for Nickel Belt made a very good case in terms of a tobacco tax. Taxes there that we have suggested, which could raise a sizeable amount of money, not only deal with the health problem that is involved but also, as was pointed out, could very effectively be split into assistance for farmers to get out of the tobacco-growing field, for some of the production workers and for some of the plants that would also need some assistance.

As well, tax money could go to the hospitals or to research in terms of the problems of cancer, smoking and the health problems that are involved. In that case, we could pay for the tradeoffs. The disruption is a relatively small one

compared to what is happening to many workers in terms of plant closures around Ontario.

We have not taken a look at some obvious sources. We have talked about expanding the retail sales tax base, not on many of the items that it should be excluded from—ordinary goods for families—but things like management consulting, engineering services, computer services or stock brokerage commissions. If you take a look at these items and a sales tax basis on these, you could quickly run up a total of \$250 million to \$300 million in potential taxes.

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The tax elimination for lower-income families is not what we would have done on it. It is nowhere near what it should be, but setting a zero tax threshold of \$11,000 of taxable income for the 1986 taxation year would cost the Ontario Treasury approximately \$110 million in forgone tax revenues. That would be a small price to pay for a major improvement in terms of the fairness of taxes in Ontario.

The elimination of Ontario health insurance plan premiums: I know of few other things that would be as effective as totally eliminating OHIP premiums. I remind most members of this House that in most of the provinces of this country today there is not a premium, which is a tax and an unfair tax. The OHIP payments are out of general revenue in the provinces, and that move in itself would certainly be a major move towards a much fairer tax structure in Ontario.

In terms of tax fairness, we simply have not made any major move at all in this budget. We have the three or four smaller points: the property tax credit, \$180 to \$230; the no-tax-payable if taxable income is \$2,483 or less—that costs \$10 million a year. How much better if the government had paid the \$110 million and really done a major job in terms of taxable income of \$11,000 or less. The OHIP threshold is going to cost \$20 million and it raises the premium threshold by only \$500. Why did we not go all the way if we are really looking at tax fairness and take a look at eliminating the premium totally in terms of our OHIP coverage?

There is very little to the tax fairness issue in this budget, and I think by not dealing with the tax elimination of those below the poverty line, by not dealing with the OHIP premiums, we have done a disservice at a time in Ontario when the Treasurer did have the money, could have raised the money in a number of different ways and could have had a major impact on taxes in Ontario in terms of tax fairness, which, as I say, I

am sure the public of this country now understands.

I am sure some members have already been doing a little door-knocking. They will find out tax fairness is a bigger issue than people realize, and probably the biggest single issue that has raised the stature and the presence of my federal leader, Ed Broadbent, across this country. They see him as a very decent, honest guy who believes in certain things, and one of the first things they will tell you at the doors is tax fairness. I do not know where the direction came from in this government, but we have not seen it take hold of that issue.

Another issue I think is worth taking a look at is the pension reform issue. I do not know how you read budget figures into this particular issue, but we are likely to have a new bill for reform of the private pension plans in Ontario that is going to deal with vesting and portability and some of the small improvements we have been after for a good many years. Some of us have sat on committees looking at pension reform for many years back in this House, but the two major items most people are concerned about—certainly working people in Ontario when you talk to them, and those who have some input through their unions into their work place, are talking about the surpluses. It is on hold at the moment, but there is certainly no indication when you listen to the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) that that money is likely to remain with the workers and do the job it should in terms of indexing—and, of course, the problem of indexing itself.

It seems to me that this government was more than a little dishonest in its approach to the pension issue. While it is obvious that they are prepared to proceed in terms of some pension reform, it is equally obvious that in appointing the three-man commission they appointed, their intent in Ontario was to make sure they had an election before they had to deal with indexing or the surpluses in those funds. I simply say that is hypocrisy of the worst kind.

In a committee of this House dealing with pension reform a number of years ago, as far as I can remember, all members, barring the New Democratic Party members on that committee, could not come to any agreement in terms of indexing. I cannot remember anybody from the Tory or Liberal parties on that committee who did not think that surpluses in pension funds were one source that could be used to improve the pensions or for some form of indexation. There was a fair amount of discussion on that in the

committee at the time. Of course, because of some electoral results and the fact that the Tories did not want to move on it, we never got the action we should have out of that committee report.

I am simply saying there seemed to be almost general agreement on that particular point. This Liberal government made the decision to stall any action on the surpluses or on the indexing until well after the next election. I can only presume that is in the hope that they can come up with a majority. I wonder, and I would like it on record in this House, if indeed we will ever see that indexing or that control by the workers in those private pension plans if the Liberals ever do get a majority government in this House. I would predict now—and it is one prediction I would really like to be wrong on, I can tell members honestly—that we will not see either of those moves if this government should win a majority in an election in Ontario. It seems to me that was something that was supposed to be done.

When I talk about now is the time when they could raise some money to do a job in terms of protecting people in Ontario, I do not see anything that really deals with some approach to bridging or earlier retirement benefits. It seems to me that is important. It is one of the directions we have to go in terms of spreading out the work in Ontario. From the workers I talk to, I am darned certain that if the bridging and the improvements were there, those who have private plans—I will concede that is only one third of the workers in Ontario, and I would much rather see some major reform in the Canada pension plan on a nationwide basis, where it is universal, but even dealing with the workers in Ontario and in private pension plans, were they able to adequately take care of themselves through some bridging, members would find an awful lot more people taking retirement.

I see nothing in this budget that gives me any encouragement that the approach to bridging an early retirement, not forcing them out, but allowing workers, particularly where they are in heavy industry or on production lines, to take an early retirement would be one of the most useful approaches that could be made.

Housing is, in my opinion, a real tragedy. I mentioned earlier today that we have high prices today that prevent many people, unless there are two in the family working—and that raises all kinds of problems in terms of layoffs or in terms of starting a family, even in terms of all of a sudden finding the interest rates going out of control again in Ontario. All of us in this House

had people who were losing their homes three or four years ago when we had the bad run-up to 21 per cent in interest rates in Ontario. Today, without two working members in the family or taking the chances that implies, many young people have not got a chance for housing.

But it is not just that. It is always the lower- and fixed-income people, the single-parent families or the families in the process of splitting up for whatever reason that really have the problems. I asked my constituency assistant to give me three examples of housing cases that were in my office within four weeks. He came up with the three very quickly. I will just read the details quickly to give members an idea. I know I am not alone on this. It underlines some of the need for a much more positive direction in terms of housing in Ontario.

On May 6, a family of five came into my constituency office on Main Street in Hamilton. Both parents were in their early 20s. Their three children were under nine years old. They had been living with the husband's parents. They were asked to leave the residence on May 5, 1987, because the father-in-law was sexually abusing the young mother. Unable to seek shelter, coupled with losing their welfare money, the family consequently spent the next night in the park in Hamilton.

They came into our office seeking shelter. They did not want to be separated from each other. However, because Hamilton does not have an emergency housing program catering to the needs of the traditional family unit, they had no alternative but to be separated. For the next few days anyhow, we directed them into hostels where they could stay tentatively.

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Next is a young woman, a single parent with four children—nine, six, two and eight weeks—who has an ongoing dispute with the landlord regarding the poor conditions of the house, especially the wiring. The landlord cut off the heat and hydro. I got involved in this one myself. The tenant goes to court and gets the hydro and heat back on. The tenant now pays the court directly, but it is an ongoing problem with inadequate and poor housing for this particular family.

Another is a young man whose wife gave him custody—or he won it; I am not sure which—of his two-and-a-half-year-old son. He was sharing a residence with a bunch of other fellows, so the housing was inappropriate. There is no emergency housing in our city for the man and child, only for women and children. He uses his parents'

address to get welfare until he can find appropriate housing. Members should try to find it. Let me tell them, it is a major problem.

We tie in these cases, which I know we all have, with the always increasing backlog of housing statistics.

In the month of March—I do not as yet have April in my office—I see we are up in the need for two bedrooms. There are now 449 on the active waiting list and many of them have been there for months and months. There are 188 people on the active waiting list for three bedrooms. There are 15 on the waiting list, a tripling of the number, for four bedrooms. There is one for five bedrooms.

For seniors, there is an increase of 26 since the previous month. There are 193 on the waiting list. For the developmentally handicapped, there are three on the waiting list. For the physically handicapped, there is an increase to 122. For the psychiatrically handicapped, there is an increase to 57. That is a total of 1,028 in my town. A lot of people have not put themselves on the register, but they are in desperate need of housing.

I am not going to take the time to go in and read the small section in the budget document on housing. It does not deal anywhere near adequately with the serious problem we have across Ontario in terms of housing.

In trying to come to grips with it, we find a lot of interesting things happening. In our town, a proposal was submitted to the Hamilton Municipal Nonprofit Housing Corp. by Habitat Hamilton. It is essentially some of the community groups that are involved in housing. While they have some good ideas, I have difficulty endorsing their proposal, because in effect it would mean eliminating the municipal nonprofit housing approach. I think there is a desperate need for that particular approach.

Of course, one of the arguments they used is that when you make it a political issue at Hamilton city council, you immediately have all the pressure. When you decide you are going to put 20 out of 40, 50 or 60 new units at a controlled-income level or for welfare recipients, you get the backlash from people. The politicians do not seem to have the guts to stand up and say, "Hey, you cannot stop this housing project from going into your neighbourhood, especially if it is a good-quality project, because one in five or one in six of the residents may be on assisted housing."

I think we have to get around that. It means all politicians have to have a little more guts when it comes to dealing with some innovative and

positive moves to deal with the housing shortage.

Housing has a multiplier effect in terms of jobs. It is not a big profit-maker for the buildings in terms of the fixed-income and lower-income needs of our people in our communities. Therefore, it is a role the government, whether it likes it or not, is going to have to play. If it thinks it can turn that over to private enterprise, it should show me the results and I will say, "Bless you." But it does not work that way, and we do not get the housing for the people who need it.

Rental legislation: there had better be some money for rent review officers, which does not show in the budget that I can see. Here is another area where I think the people of Ontario were really let down.

I can recall the Premier and the Liberal Party going around Ontario saying four per cent. But when we got the rental bill, what was it? It was 5.2 per cent, but with a series of exceptions or loopholes—what do you call them?—costs that could be charged through that could bring the rent as high as 15 per cent, 18 per cent and 19 per cent.

Ms. E. J. Smith: You voted for it. You liked it.

Mr. Mackenzie: No, we did not. We voted against it, so the government House leader is wrong. Luckily, she had the Tories with her on that one.

Ms. E. J. Smith: I am not the House leader, so you are wrong.

Mr. Mackenzie: The government whip, I am sorry.

The point I want to make is that most of the rent increases that are coming through in my riding are coming through at 10 per cent, 12 per cent and 15 per cent. There is a perception out there among the people who are living in those units that they have been had. They have been had by this government with an inadequate and indefensible housing bill, which we did not support. Apart from anything else, it does not deal with the problems of roomers.

When it comes to that bill, the Minister of Housing has not been able to give an answer, even though he has been asked for two weeks running in this House about what the people who have appealed, who are waiting for their rent review hearings, should be doing. When we raised it a week or two ago, the backlog was already over 18,000. I forget the number of rent review officers, but they will be years dealing with it. I understand it is up to 21,000 or 22,000 now.

I simply ask this government, where is the money in the budget to put on that problem the number of officers needed to deal with it or to work out some kind of emergency one-shot priority program to clean up that backlog of 22,000, with people waiting for justice, really, because of an inadequate housing bill?

One of the jokes some of the counsel made at that committee—one of the lawyers said to me one day, "Of all the legislation I have ever seen in Ontario, this bill is the most difficult to understand." Quite frankly, I think that applies to most of us—I know it does to me—but it is obvious the minister himself understands it least of all, and we have a really serious problem.

Mr. Epp: That is not true, and you know it.

Mr. Mackenzie: That is exactly true, and that came from one of the government's lawyers.

Mr. Epp: That is garbage.

Mr. Mackenzie: It is garbage to the member, if that is what he thinks it is—the problem people are having. There are 22,000 on the waiting list and they cannot get hearings. It is a bill that is totally inadequate, totally wrong and is a retreat from what the Premier said when he was campaigning in Ontario.

I want to tell members about another problem we have that I do not see addressed in this budget, about which we have raised a number of cases: we raised the Villanucci case and workers' compensation here today. One of the things that has bothered me in the last week is another example of some of my constituency case load. Like a number of members in this caucus, we have always done a lot of Workers' Compensation Board cases, a lot of work on them.

I had a chap come to me who had pretty well documented a hearing loss at Dofasco, who had also had an accident, although it was a number of years ago, in which he had fallen and injured the side of his head. He was telling me he thought part of his hearing loss was not just the exposure he had in the steel mill, but was also a result of this accident a number of years back. He had one doctor who wrote a letter to the board saying he thought the chap had a case that could be made.

Simply because we cannot handle the volume of WCB cases, we got him third-hand, but before we got him he had been down to the workers' adviser in Hamilton. Do members know what he was told at the office of the workers' adviser in Hamilton, even though he had all the detailed information there? The worker adviser he talked to said, "Look, my active case load is more than 150 cases." Nobody on earth can deal with that kind of case load. Long ago, we decided—I forget

what the figure was—that 80 or 90 cases was the maximum one could effectively handle.

He was told they would put him on a waiting list and maybe five, six or seven months down the road, they might be able to talk to him. But they referred him instead to one of the community legal aid clinics, McQuesten, in Hamilton. He went down there and was told virtually the same thing: “Our case load is too heavy. We cannot take on cases unless it is an immediate emergency.” This chap was still working, so it was not that he did not have any income, but he now has a very serious hearing impairment.

As a result of that case, I called the workers’ adviser board in Hamilton and found that is par for the course. Maybe if it could get rid of the peninsula cases, the staff there could begin to catch up, but it was getting further and further behind. I understand that is the case right across the province.

How can we set up a system of workers’ advisers—and we have hired some staff—and say this is one of the things we are going to do because we recognize the problems that existed with the Workers’ Compensation Board, and then have people go in with what may very well be a legitimate complaint to be told: “Go on the waiting list. We may deal with you six or seven months down the road”? I do not see anything in this budget that comes to grips with that kind of backlog and that problem in terms of workers’ compensation.

If there is one item that bothers me more than anything else, it is the lack of any real action in this budget in terms of plant closures. I must go to the accord. I see the Premier’s name and signature on this accord, as well as my leader’s. In document 3 it says, “Reform of job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns and improved severance legislation.”

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I want a government member, any of them, to tell me what they have done. If there is one single item in the accord that they agreed to—as one of the 22 items they promised for our support in being given two years to form a government in Ontario—that they have done less on, it is plant closures. We had better understand in this House that we have an increasing problem here that has not gone away. I am inclined to agree with my colleague from the Tories, the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden), that we may be entering an increased problem in terms of plant closures.

Let me use two or three of the better-known ones as to why it is absolutely essential that we have legislation in Ontario that protects workers in plant closure situations. In the Goodyear case, regardless of the merits of the plant on which they had spent something like \$18 million—some of it government money—to upgrade it over the past three or four years, the workers did not get much more than the minimum required by law in terms of severance after 20 and 30 years, and more than 40 years’ service in some cases.

When we got them before our committee, we had Mr. Buzby, the Canadian president, all of a sudden come out in those committee hearings with the comment, “We probably are going to be building a new tire plant somewhere in the Golden Horseshoe.” “When?” “Tentatively, within five years.” What was the next question? “What about these 1,500-and-some workers who have made their living and in effect given their lives to Goodyear? Will they have preferential hiring?” I think everybody in this House is aware now what Mr. Buzby’s answer was because we have certainly raised it in questions in this House. Mr. Buzby’s answer was, “They can stand in line like anybody else.”

I am talking about the commitment to working people who have given their lives to a company. I am saying that when you get that kind of answer from the president of Goodyear in Canada, it does not show any respect or any responsibility—I guess “responsibility” is really the word—for the workers in that plant.

I made a statement in the House the other day on a situation at the Consolidated Bathurst plant in my riding that I consider to be a travesty of justice. When they closed that plant down, some 160 workers there got the minimum. They did not have the best pension plan. Just six months before the company all of a sudden closed that container plant, they had negotiated a new contract. Had they known the company was planning to close it, they would have negotiated a much different contract for those who could get them in terms of pension improvements, the severance pay package and other benefits that would tide them over.

The lowest-seniority person in that plant was 17 years. They were able to go to the Ontario Labour Relations Board after they closed the plant and argue that the company had bargained in bad faith. The company had and the company was found guilty. They won a measly, because it is, \$310,000 or \$311,000 of additional money. That plant closed four years ago. They got that decision a year and a half after that. Here, four

years later, those workers have not had a cent of that money.

What has the company done? I suspect it has already spent more money in legal fees than it would have cost to pay the money to the workers, but what has it done? First, it took it to the Supreme Court of Ontario, challenging the decision of the labour relations board and the company lost on a three-to-nothing decision in favour of the workers and the decision that had been made by the board.

Frustration: I have told this House there have been suicides in that plant. A number of workers now are deceased four years later. It was an older work force. After that court decision, the workers thought they were finally going to get their money. They heard just this past week that the company now has been given leave to appeal it to the Supreme Court of Canada. Another year from now, we will be lucky to see any decision on the \$300,000-and-some. It now is up to \$350,000 to \$360,000 with the interest on that money.

There is no perception whatsoever of justice as far as those workers in that plant are concerned. They figure the system, the government and anybody who is in control has taken them to the cleaners and does not give a damn about their interests. There are reasons for it when I sound a little agitated—I have said this in this House a number of times before but it bears repeating. I was at the meeting in the office of Mr. Ramsay, the Minister of Labour of the previous government; as was Gordon Walker, the then Minister of Industry and Trade; a representative of the Liberal Party, one of its sitting members; and the mayor and regional chairman of the city of Hamilton.

We sat down. They refused to let the union attend—this was after the plant shutdown—but we had Mr. Stangeland, the president of the container division of that company, now Mac-Millan Bloedel. We asked him to give the workers a little more time because they had put together a potential—as I have said before, in this case I do not think it would have worked but they had talked to the people in Peterborough, Pioneer Chainsaw, and they had put together a package that might have allowed them to make a bid on the plant because most of their production was also sold in the Hamilton area.

What was Mr. Stangeland's answer at that meeting when we asked for a little more time? His answer, point blank, was: "Look, Imperial Oil wouldn't sell a good, choice corner lot to Texaco. Why should we put up with the

competition?" In other words, be damned to these 160-odd workers. They sure as blazes were not give them any opportunity and they sure as heck were not going to put up with the competition. I thought that is what I heard both old parties in this House talking about: the marketplace, free enterprise, competition. I have heard it thrown at us in so many different issues so many times.

But we only found out at that meeting in the minister's office that their lawyers were negotiating right that day to sell the plant to Reid Dominion Packaging next door. The immediate question that two of us asked was, "Would you put in a good word and see if they will hire some of these 160-odd workers?" Do the members know what Mr. Stangeland's answer to that was? "We wouldn't appreciate anybody telling us who to hire. We don't intend to tell anybody else who to hire."

So, it is out on the road; close it down with minimum requirements and the devastation that results to this day among those older workers, and I see nothing that means a tiddler's damn in this document or in this budget to protect those workers.

I could go into dozens of cases because I have sat on two of those committees. Those are just two that stand out in my mind and I think make the case I am trying to make here. I am simply saying that when we got into a committee—once again, it was the government's way out: refer it to one of the standing committees and deal with plant closures in a minimum period of time—in that committee we usually found the Tories and Liberals voting together against a number of recommendations made by both the Ontario Federation of Labour and this party to try to protect workers in plant shutdown situations.

To me, this issue is a real tragedy that we have not come to grips with and that we are going to see increasing in the province. Our priorities had better start showing some responsibility to the workers who are involved in these plant closure situations. We have not done it until now.

There are a number of other items. I was interested to hear the government member across the way say, "Hey, the only crazy things we are doing"—that was not the exact word he used. We talk about auto insurance. I do not know what the rest of the people in this House are getting, but I can tell members that my last riding report had more than 2,600 responses, two and a half times the most I have ever had since I have been a member here. It is running about 93 per cent in favour of a public auto insurance plan.

The public out there understands this issue if the government does not. They understand it very clearly; they understand it as an issue, once again, of fairness. We have had the figures as to the way people get stuck raised time and again in this House. It is an issue of fairness, an issue of helping young people, because they pay the price for auto insurance more than anybody else. The unfairness of it is that you are guilty before you ever have an accident if you are under 25 years of age. It is also an issue of discrimination because it clearly does.

When I got that call from one of the insurance brokers who has just sent me the three big ads on "In a pig's ear" or "Can a pig fly?" that they are going to be running to take us on in this issue, when she called me up and gave me some of the grey areas that they had been instructed not to write policies for, the one that really threw me—it may be far from the most important one—was that if one is living common law, unless it is for more than five years, or one has a child, one is automatically the highest of the Facility Association rates.

I could get into the young people; I could get into if you put your car up for two years; I could get into minor traffic violations, not accidents, and the rates people are paying in this province. We have the kinds of games that are being played by the minister on this issue. As I can say is they had better wake up.

Jobs: I really wonder why we have the set-piece little programs again in this budget but do not take a serious look at what really could provide more work. We are still facing a revolution in terms of new technology, in terms of the automation, in terms of the technology in our plants today. We can see increased production in almost everything with fewer workers.

1740

Heck, I have been told that at Stelco there are probably another 1,200 workers going over the next five years. They are down to the lowest in their history right now. They are going to try to do it through attrition. But we are seeing this happening across this province of ours and we see nothing that indicates the government is willing to take a serious look in any way, shape or form at lower hours.

A number of European countries are down to 38 hours in a work week now. That is difficult. We might have to do it a half hour a year over a period of time; I do not know. Nobody underestimates the job we would have in taking that kind of approach to make sure we have work we can spread around to our people. Our people do not

want welfare or benefits without working; they want jobs. But we have not made any approach in terms of looking at the hours of work.

We have not made any approach at cutting down on the overtime. I am the first in this House who has acknowledged that five years ago I could not have sold that to some of my unions or some of the plants, but I can tell members that the workers are looking at it now. In most of the unions or plants we could sell it. We would still have some opposition, but some of them are actively pushing it. But we have nothing happening in terms of looking at the hours of overtime that are routinely worked in this province.

We have nothing there that says Ontario, which is near the bottom of the list in terms of statutory holidays with seven of them, could not raise it to eight or nine. The experts tell me we could actually put figures on the number of new jobs that we would create by increased vacation time and increased statutory holidays. Why should a province like Ontario, really the richest province in the country, not be taking the lead in this area rather than trailing the pack in Canada?

What about vacations, two weeks by law in Ontario? There are two other provinces that have three and four weeks now after 10 or 15 years' service. There is hardly a country in industrial Europe that we compete with that does not have up to five weeks, and in Sweden it is up to six weeks' vacation after a couple of years in the work place. We are literally trailing the pack in this country of ours in terms of vacation legislation. The only way you get four, five or six weeks is if you are lucky enough to have a strong union, and that in itself discriminates against a heck of a lot of people who have not organized in that fashion in this country.

I would love to deal with free trade, but I will not.

Mr. Davis: Good.

Mr. Mackenzie: It is obvious on the Tory side that they are promoting it like blazes, and we are going to suffer for it if it ever comes about in this province.

It is a major issue. I think I heard my colleague say there is one small paragraph in the Treasurer's budget statement on it. If there was ever an area, because it ties in with some of the other things I have talked about, that we should have a much more careful approach and a much more positive position—not the current Liberal position.

I defy anybody to really know what it is. I hear the Premier saying, "Hey, you know that we are

not going to let them get away with anything, and I do not really support it." Then I sat on the committee where all the Liberal members voted with the Tories in favour of endorsing the federal initiative, albeit with some reservations—most of which have been shot down since by statements by the Americans—in terms of the level playing field, in terms of their not being willing to give up the countervail legislation, any number of areas. So the Liberals have no more a position on free trade that would give people any feeling of security in Canada than the Tories, who admit where they stand. At least they are a little more honest on it.

I also take a look at this budget and look for some of the local issues. Even though we have had it now since about 1971 or 1972, which was the first time Ian Deans got the commitment in this House, I do not see any guarantees, I do not see for sure the funding for the east-end medical clinic in Hamilton.

I do not see any funding for the Redhill Creek expressway, although this government was quick to jump to the tune of the developers in Hamilton. I will never forgive the minister from my own area, the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro). She even had a meeting with us to give her some more arguments to use in cabinet, and then she is the one who goes down and announces that they are going ahead with this freeway which will destroy the Redhill Creek valley in the Hamilton area and have a major effect on the last major greenbelt area in our city.

It seems to me that rather than what she had told us—that she was in opposition to it and wanted the arguments and would defend the position of the people—the developer said, "Jump," and the minister said, "How high?"

Mr. Wildman: Her effectiveness was shown by what her department got in the budget.

Mr. Mackenzie: Maybe the budget also gives an indication of what weight she has.

I really do not see where the funds are for the Hamilton waterfront improvement, I do not see in here the desperate need for cleanup of Hamilton harbour and I do not see the money—I am told it is not specifically delegated. I know the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) raised this issue specifically in the House the other day. I do not see any firm commitment in terms of the need for GO Transit into downtown Hamilton in this budget.

I do not see a number of other services that are long overdue. I am talking about additional services to a rapidly growing older population. A small point, if I can, but just to try to underline it:

Not only do we need the services to keep them in their homes, because that is a lot cheaper than institutionalizing them and a lot better for their health, physically and mentally, but we also are getting—I presume the other members here are getting the same thing I am getting; they are getting an increased number of people who are calling. They are usually in their late 70s or 80s and have a little bit of difficulty. They are still in their homes.

In a five-minute drive, I could take members to three of them near my constituency office in my riding. They come to me and say, "Mr. Mackenzie, I would love it if somebody could help me put a garden in." They have a very small postage-sized backyard; these are small homes. Or, "I would love it if somebody could do something about shovelling my little walkway in the winter time when we get a heavy snow-storm." Or, "I would love it if I could get somebody to look after the lawn regularly." I know one guy who is paying 30 bucks a month—and I think he is overpaying—for some of this kind of assistance. In most cases, they cannot even find the service. It seems to me there is a tremendous area for growth here in terms of looking after—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: They should go to Outreach.

Mr. Mackenzie: Yes, they go to Outreach. We in my constituency office use every facility that is there, but we cannot provide all these kinds of services. They are not adequate. There are not enough of them in terms of the number of people who need them, and the demand for these particular services is going to increase. It is vitally important that we take a look at this.

There is another area I just passed by, but I want to go back to it. I think we have to be innovative and look at what we can do in terms of earlier retirement and bridging to open up jobs. One of the things that surprised me, because I had not picked it up before, is in the plants. They are talking now about whether they will take an early retirement when it is negotiated, where they are lucky enough to have a union and have a better pension than some. Stelco is a fine example of it.

One of the things the workers are telling me is, "We would take retirement almost immediately if you could add one additional thing to the package." Early retirement is important and it means some of them do take the early pension—bridging there is important—but they are as scared as blazes of the loss of benefits, whether it is their drug plans, their hearing plans, their dental plans or what not.

We had one plant in the Hamilton area where we thought we had negotiated an excellent early retirement package. It was a vast improvement in early retirement pension benefits. There were 25 people who were eligible to take it; only three of them would. All but two in that age range of 55, 60 or 65 years said they would if there was some way that some of the benefits could be worked in.

I think the costs would not outweigh the benefits of opening up the jobs for people and the additional healthier environment that some of the workers who would like to take that kind of retirement would be in if they were allowed to. I do not see any of these new initiatives in this budget.

In closing, I want to say I hope the members of this government will show some integrity in the three or four things they have let us down on and have not done in terms of the accord and, on something like plant closures, where they have not moved, period.

I hope that they will try to do some of these things before they call an election. The game that is being played in this House is a great one, in terms of calling an election. I personally do not care when they call it; I am prepared whenever they do call it. I have a hunch that the voters out there are saying the same thing that they said to me in the last two elections when I knocked on doors: "It seems to us the only time we get anything at all that is worth anything to us is during a minority government." We have that now. With a little more attention to a more progressive agenda, this government could probably rule for some time yet.

Interjection.

Mr. Mackenzie: The Liberals would probably do it more often with the Progressive Conservative support than they would with ours. Our commitment is there until June 26. We will play it on the issues thereafter, and that is exactly the way I will play it.

It seems to me that if the government brings in legislation that is worth something to people—and that should be the approach of the government. The reason I say that very clearly, and the reason I am a little bit upset right now, is simply that the people of Ontario did not oust a Tory government—obviously, they were not sure what they were going to get at the time—to elect another Tory government. There is an increasing perception that that is exactly what they have done.

In closing, I want to tell this government that if it is not prepared to deal with the kinds of issues I have outlined, and many others I have not dealt

with because I do not have time, we sure as blazes are prepared to deal with them in Ontario. The voters know it and the government may be in for a surprise.

1750

Mr. Barlow: I was listening to the member very closely. I was following him and perhaps even agreeing with some of his points until he called those fellows over there Tories. That I object to.

Mr. McClellan: They are second-rate Tories.

Mr. Barlow: They are second-rate Tories, but comparing them with Tories of any sort is really unfair. I almost feel I should ask the member to withdraw that remark, but I will not.

Mr. Wildman: I am sure my colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) and most members of the House would agree with me that the budget introduced last week could indeed have been introduced by Darcy McKeough, the member for York Mills or even the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. E. J. Smith: In the brief time I have been left, I would like to make a few comments on this budget. I am happy indeed to be the first woman who has had the opportunity to speak to it. During my time in public and quasi-public life, it has been my experience that women have a particularly practical approach to things such as budgets.

I would like to give a demonstration of this. In my job as budget chairman for the United Way, I was able to observe that the Boy Scouts got 10 times what the Girl Guides got, to deal with the same number of children. The Big Sisters had a 10th of what the Big Brothers had, and did an equally good job.

As a woman, I am very happy to have this opportunity to address the provincial budget. In fact, I look forward to the day when women may form the majority of this House. Indeed, hopefully in my time, we may even see a woman Premier. I look forward to this, particularly coming from the fine city of London, where we have one of the two most exclusive men's clubs going. In those days, they may even let the women into the London Club in London.

I want to point out to this House that this budget continues what the Treasurer introduced in the last budget, an openness and an easily presented budget that is directed to the people. At that time, he promised he would have input from the people, and indeed set up the finance and economic committee so that we had such input. I think this will be an ongoing and welcome

contribution to the budget process in the province.

He addressed the deficit and reduced what, on our coming to office, was anticipated to be a \$2-billion deficit and brought it to under \$1 billion in this particular year.

I will not address the area of agriculture. I will only point out that this is a very needed area in this province. Agriculture has not benefited by the overall prosperity the province is feeling. The Treasurer has put a 72 per cent increase to try to look after this very troublesome area in our economy.

I will not address the north because our next speaker is from the north, but I will point out that even in our past term we have moved 1,200 jobs to the north, which represents a \$40-million payroll.

We have continued our good programs in small business and expanded the number of those who can take advantage of them.

We have added to our housing for the disadvantaged and will continue to make the home care option, so important and introduced in this last term, available to the whole province.

I want to point out particularly that the Treasurer in the budget recognizes the concern of this party that indeed in this country we are aware that there seems to be a drift towards the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. It is most important to us to see that the changes introduced in this budget address this problem.

By tax relief, this budget takes 100,000 of our lowest-income people right out of the tax level. They will no longer be taxed; 60,000 more will be taxed at a reduced rate. The property tax credit will be extended. The seniors will get more relief in tax areas. Ontario health insurance plan payments will be taken off to the tune of 40,000 people paying no more OHIP premiums because of their lower incomes. These are very important steps.

Mrs. Marland: I thought you were going to take OHIP off everyone.

Ms. E. J. Smith: We recognize that as an election promise we would have liked to have taken this further, but we also recognize that we cannot do everything in a short period and that this at least can be done for those who need it most.

In my office, there have been two particular groups I have heard from regularly as needing special assistance from this House. One group is the older unemployed workers, the people who have been laid off after many years. It is a very tragic group: people who have not been laid off

through any of their own neglect or anything they can control, but rather because the nature of the job market has changed and they find themselves unemployed. I am particularly happy to see that a \$14-million annual income is being put forward for the retraining of this group, which had not been addressed in the other budget.

The retraining of younger people continues. Futures, the program that is doing so well in helping young people into the job market, will be strengthened. Co-op training between the high schools and businesses, which is also looking very successful, will be strengthened and increased.

I was happy as well to see the change in the cost for foreign students in universities. I guess I am particularly aware of this and glad of the equalization because of my recent trip to Nicaragua. When you go to an underdeveloped country or a country we are trying to attract and keep in the democratic process, it is very sad to find that we are doing nothing to help in training their most able people so that they can go back and take our message of the value of democracy to their country. This was an added bonus of which I was glad.

We speak of the deficit and addressing the deficit, but there is more than one kind of deficit, and the biggest deficit that this budget addresses is the deficit in the infrastructure of our society, in our sewer systems, our pollution control, our schools, our senior citizens' housing and our universities. I am particularly happy to see that we recognize that in these prosperous days, we must do what had been so long neglected by the Tory government. We must start rebuilding schools and our universities and looking at the housing we are providing for our senior citizens.

In London, I have been able to see that particularly, because White Oaks happens to be the most expanding area in this province, short of Mississauga, for young people. I understand the importance of rebuilding the school system and getting a lot of our young people out of schools that are fundamentally just add-on units.

In London too, we will be happy to address this support for rest homes, as Dearness Home, our home, is greatly in need of government support and will find it available in the \$100-million budget provision.

I was happy to be in London the end of last week, when we were able to acknowledge and accept a grant of \$16.7 million for a new science centre. This, like other announcements recently made, recognized the importance of building excellence in our universities so that as a

province we can compete not only nationally but also internationally.

We recognize and support the province in its great thrust in technological and scientific expansion. The hospital programs and the school programs were well launched last year and will be continued.

The two areas I would like to address very briefly in my last 30 seconds are the emphasis the Treasurer put on the fact that we must look to the federal government and pressure the federal

government to correct its overall social assistance so that social assistance properly ties in with the programs of taxation.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. With an eye on the clock, perhaps the member would like to move adjournment of the debate and complete her comments on another day.

On motion by Ms. E. J. Smith, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

APPENDIX

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

RENT REGULATION

5. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Housing provide the number of Rent Review Update published, a list of all media carrying the ad, the mailing lists used for distribution, the cost of advertising, the cost of postage, the frequency of the advertisement in its respective medium and how many calendar days in each respective medium will the ad be run? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 65.

TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

9. Mr. McFadden: Would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology provide the list of all participants and invitees to the ministry-sponsored free trade conference at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, the duration of the conference and a detailed cost summary of the conference? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 66.

TRIPS ON MINISTRY'S BOATS

68. Ms. Fish: Would the Minister of the Environment provide all documentation as of November 26, 1986, regarding all trips taken on the ministry's boats, all attendees, duration of trip(s), purpose of trip(s), cost and any refreshments served? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 67.

POLLUTION CONTROL

110. Mr. Harris: Would the Minister of the Environment provide the number of control orders issued by the ministry since May 8, 1986; the dates the orders were issued; to which firms, including their addresses; and the reason(s) the orders were issued? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 68.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

116. Mr. Villeneuve: Would the acting Minister of Government Services indicate whether it was unusual for it to negotiate its lease of 10 Wellesley Street East a year and a half before the lease expired when in normal circumstances such renegotiation would commence approximately six months before the termination of the lease? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Conway: It is not unusual for the province to negotiate leases before six months prior to the termination of the lease. It is generally the practice of the ministry to negotiate renewals one year to eight months prior to renewal. Following a review of our lease portfolio and our leasing procedures, however, the ministry has concluded that it is at times in the government's interest to begin renewal negotiations even earlier in order to take advantage of market conditions or options for relocation. The lead time required to negotiate, design and construct leasehold improvements for this amount of space is at least one year.

The negotiated rental was at the time, and remains, favourable. The validity of the rate was confirmed by an outside consultant, a practice the Ministry of Government Services employs when negotiating any major lease.

SALE OF COMPUTERS

119. Mr. Runciman: Would the Minister of Colleges and Universities outline his ministry's position with respect to St. Lawrence College's decision to sell computers and support products to both its full-time and part-time students at a lower-than-retail price? Did the minister discuss this initiative with the college? What is the rationale used to support or allow the sale of these computers considering the impact this will have on local small businesses near the three college campuses? Is the minister prepared to review this initiative, and will the minister at the very least limit the sale of the computers to only the college's full-time students? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: Access to computers is required for educational purposes, and while the purchase of equipment is not mandatory, it is St. Lawrence College's position that the student's educational experience is greatly enhanced by its acquisition.

It is the policy of St. Lawrence College to sell books, resource materials and equipment to students at the lowest possible cost to students. Consistent with this policy, the college is selling computers at normal wholesale cost, as determined through educational purchase arrangements with the equipment supplier.

Administrative matters, such as those relating to the sale of books or other educational

materials, are internal college responsibilities, and prior discussion with the minister regarding such matters is not normal, nor even appropriate.

To limit the sale of computers to full-time students only places part-time students at a disadvantage and diminishes their potential learning experience. The ministry is, however, reviewing the broader issue of colleges' commercial activities generally and the need for guidelines to assist in the assessment of individual activities.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

120. Mr. McCague: Would the acting Chairman of Management Board provide a detailed account of all expenses incurred by the chairman of the advisory committee for the northern development council, including travel, since his appointment, as well as the ministry, agency, board or commission which paid for the specific expenses? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 69.

BILINGUAL PUBLIC SERVANTS

123. Mr. Runciman: Would the minister responsible for francophone affairs table the following information: (1) How many bilingual French-English and unilingual French individuals are now employed by the Ontario government, not including summer students; (2) under Bill 8, how many bilingual French-English and unilingual French individuals will be hired by the Ontario government? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: 1. In 1986, the Ontario government completed a census of all Ontario public service staff and a study on the recruitment and advancement policies and practices of the Ontario public service. The data collected should provide us with information on the number of bilingual public service employees. I have been advised that the results of these studies are expected to be released soon.

2. Ministries and agencies affected by Bill 8 are in the process of determining what additional human resources they will need to ensure that services are provided in French in the designated areas. These estimates, which are to be prepared by June 1987, will then be evaluated by the Office of Francophone Affairs and Management Board of Cabinet, in collaboration with the human resources secretariat and the Ontario French Language Services Commission.

When this process is completed, I will be in a position to provide information on the number of bilingual employees who are expected to be hired to meet the requirements of Bill 8. The French

Language Services Act does not require ministries to recruit unilingual francophone staff.

FOREST SPRAYING PROGRAM

130. Mr. Wildman: Since the Minister of Natural Resources has indicated that 2,4-D will be sprayed aerially in northern Ontario this summer, will he advise the House in precisely what areas it will be sprayed and when this spraying is scheduled to take place? [Tabled May 5, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Spraying will be conducted throughout the summer months as part of the ongoing forest management program. Areas and hectares involved in spraying are listed below:

1987 proposed herbicide program 2,4-D

Region	Hectares		
	Crown	FMA	Total
Northern	11,054	19,147	30,201
Northeastern	940	580	1,520
North-central	1,021	195	1,216
Northwestern	267	1,670	1,937
Total	13,282	21,592	34,874

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

131. Mr. McFadden: Would the Minister of Revenue provide the following information with regard to the newly completed market value assessment study of property taxes in the city of Toronto: the number of ministry employees brought into the city for the study, the cost of accommodation and related expenses for the duration of the employees' stay and the cost and location of the space rented for the completion of the study? [Tabled May 12, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Nixon: An updated study of property taxes in Metropolitan Toronto was prepared in response to a request made by Metropolitan Toronto Chairman Dennis Flynn.

On November 18, 1986, the Metropolitan Toronto chairman wrote to the Minister of Revenue requesting that an assessment impact study based on 1984 market value be produced and delivered to Metro Toronto's advisory task force on assessment reform for its review and consideration.

While the study was provided for delivery in June 1987, the ministry was able to present the study to Metro Toronto's advisory task force on assessment reform on May 12, 1987. The preparation of this impact study involved updat-

ing a previous study based on 1980 market values to 1984 market value levels.

The four assessment offices within Metropolitan Toronto were assisted by seconded staff in their efforts to produce the assessment impact study involving more than 500,000 properties.

Covering the period from January 12, 1987, to March 6, 1987, the secondment involved 143 assessors, with 97 assessors commuting to Metro Toronto on a daily basis. The remaining 46 assessors required accommodation within Metro Toronto. The cost of accommodation and related expenses for the duration of the employees' stay totalled \$304,420.

Rental space for the project consisted of three locations over 2.25 months in each. These locations and their rental costs were:

Victoria-Royce Presbyterian, 190 Medland Street, Toronto: \$1,000 times 2.25 months equals \$2,250.

Dewi Sant Welsh United, 33 Melrose Avenue, Toronto: \$1,400 times 2.25 months equals \$3,150.

Cosburn United Church, 1108 Greenwood Avenue, Toronto: \$625 times 2.25 months equals \$1,406.25.

Total: \$6,806.25.

INTERIM ANSWERS

1. Mr. Martel: Hon. Mr. Wrye—Additional time is required to respond to this question. A final answer will be available for tabling on or around September 30, 1987.

7. Mr. Runciman: Hon. Mr. Kwinter—My staff are in the process of preparing a detailed response to this question, which will be provided by July 15, 1987.

14 and 15. Mr. McFadden: Hon. Mr. O'Neil—The information is currently being compiled and will be provided not later than June 16, 1987.

17 to 19. Mr. McFadden: Hon. Mr. O'Neil—The information is currently being compiled and will be provided not later than June 16, 1987.

129. Mr. Villeneuve: Hon. Mr. Nixon—All costs relating to expenditures incurred at the end of April 1987 will not be available until all expense claims are received, probably towards mid-June. Allowing time to review, verify and consolidate the breakdown of expenditures required in the question, the answer should be available on or about July 27, 1987.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

SUNDAY RACING

Sessional paper 37, re Sunday racing at Greenwood Racetrack.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The Racing Commission Act gives the commission the specific authority to regulate racing within the boundaries of a racetrack. The Supreme Court of Ontario Divisional Court ruled on April 30, 1987, that the Ontario Racing Commission does not have jurisdiction to hear concerns of residents in neighbourhoods surrounding racetracks.

In the matter of the petition, the petitioners' request that the government amend the Racing Commission Act could be viewed by municipalities as an infringement on their jurisdiction, granted under the Municipal Act and the Planning Act, to establish municipal control over zoning, parking and other community considerations.

Any amendments to provincial legislation to preclude Sunday racing specifically, or Sunday activities in general, may raise challenges under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The issue of Sunday openings has been examined recently by a legislative committee. As part of its consideration of options to deal with the issue, the government is awaiting the release of the legislative committee's report.

NIAGARA REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Sessional paper 42, re Niagara regional government.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: I am giving consideration to the request of the Niagara Citizens' Committee for a review of the organization and functioning of regional government in Niagara. Through such a study, options for improving regional government would be considered and the public's understanding of local government would be increased.

I would prefer that any regional government reviews which are undertaken deal with specific problems. It is my feeling that focused reviews produce greater results.

I understand that Niagara regional council will be approaching the province with a request for assistance. Before the province can agree to participate, it will be necessary to develop detailed terms of reference which are acceptable to all parties. This ministry will be working to develop these terms of reference in the months ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Niagara Citizens' Committee for their interest in the workings of local government.

INTERIM RESPONSE

Sessional paper 36, re the sale of products such as Sarasoda and Caesar's Shandy, which have an alcoholic content.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: This ministry, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, requires

additional time to prepare a more complete response. This will be available on or about June 4, 1987.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, May 26, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, May 26, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Harris: For a government which has managed to increase spending by \$8 billion in two years, its record of underspending in northern Ontario is astonishing.

The north is littered with broken Liberal promises: the northern development fund—\$40 million committed, \$17 million spent; \$9 million committed for small business development corporation funding, \$6.6 million spent; \$10 million committed for community economic transformation agreements, less than \$500,000 spent; the highly touted northern Ontario science and math school mysteriously disappeared; the \$30-million softwood lumber rebates the Premier (Mr. Peterson) promised to be reinvested to retrain laid-off forestry workers, not a dime has been spent; and the list is growing—almost \$66 million already promised and committed to northern Ontario not spent.

Yet these same Liberals want northerners to rejoice in a so-called \$30-million northern Ontario heritage fund. Clearly a fraud—less than half of what the north is already due from previous promises. New money? No. Only half of the old money stolen from poorly managed existing programs. Anything for gasoline prices? No. Four-laning? No. Less money for transportation. Legislative research says 15.7 per cent less was spent last year. The new money simply restores what we used to get.

New taxes? Mining taxes up \$66 million. Now they give back \$5 million and expect us to be happy.

This budget and administration are a sham.

POLICE PURSUITS

Ms. Bryden: The shocking details on the latest fatality resulting from a police chase in Ontario in today's *Globe and Mail* call for immediate action by the cabinet and the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) to stop this very dangerous practice.

Between 1981 and 1984 there were over 6,700 police chases undertaken in Ontario, over 1,300 a year, resulting in 39 deaths and 642 personal injuries. In 1986, six high-speed chases took place every week in Metropolitan Toronto, resulting in injuries to 60 citizens, 33 police officers and \$500,000 in property damage. Despite growing demands for an end to this carnage, the Solicitor General continues to drag his feet on the question.

Back in 1984, the Progressive Conservative government set up the MacBeth commission to study the question following the deaths of two teenagers in a Walkerton-area police chase. Even though that committee finally reported in December 1986, the Solicitor General did not respond to its recommendations for almost six months. In May 1986, he announced that his ministry would bring in new guidelines to restrict chases. Despite subsequent promises of action, we still do not have any province-wide guidelines or binding rules on this matter.

ACID RAIN

Mr. G. I. Miller: As vice-chairman of the select committee on the environment, I would like to rise and congratulate the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) for his quick response to the recommendations of the committee. There were many. I know they are going to be useful for Ontario, and particularly for the Minister of the Environment when he deals with our friends south of the border.

As we all know, 80 per cent of the acid rain respects no border, and it comes from the American side. As we negotiate those new agreements it will certainly give the Minister of the Environment the tools to work with. We would like to congratulate the minister for responding as quickly as he did to those requests. We know that things are in good hands.

DEFICIT

Mr. Andrewes: Last Wednesday's budget gave new meaning to the public cynicism that the Liberal Party's politicians are masters of smoke and mirrors.

The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is projecting a 1987-88 deficit of \$980 million. However, this

same budget contends that the government will spend \$1.3 billion more than it expects to receive in revenue. The negative contingency fund of \$350 million will be reflected through the Treasurer's smoky mirror as a result of some yet to be determined savings.

This is the same Treasurer who overspent by \$300 million in 1985-86. This is the same Treasurer who overspent by \$1,039,000,000 in 1986-87. It is the same Treasurer who refuses to tell us which hospitals will not be built, which municipal sewer projects will not be approved or how many of the 157 throne speech promises will be broken.

When the smoke clears, we will see that the government not only has disguised the magnitude of its real deficit but also has inflated the value of its operating and capital accounts.

Come clean, I say to the Treasurer. Your smoke and mirrors have not fooled one editor of a daily or weekly journal in the province, and they will not fool a single voter.

WORKER ADVISERS

Mr. Mackenzie: We have a growing problem in the province in the position of the worker advisers appointed through the Workers' Compensation Board. One of the more positive arrangements has been made to help workers, one that is already proving the desperate need that was there in terms of the work load that was on unions, advocacy groups and members of this House.

The same work load is now showing up in terms of the worker advisers of the board. The case load in the Golden Horseshoe, in the Hamilton area, has reached the point where it is now well over 150 cases for some of the individual workers.

Indeed, I had a constituent of mine go in the other day on a long-standing hearing-loss problem from his plant and he was told that if he wanted to go on the waiting list for up to six months, fine, but because their case load was in excess of 150 cases, they could not touch him for a number of months.

I want to say that this is one of the positive initiatives that has helped a lot of people and has helped the members of this House, and it must not be allowed to go down the tube. It is one of the areas the government is going to have to move on very quickly to see that we have adequate facilities in terms of worker advisers in Ontario to take care of the kind of case load they now are experiencing.

As well as having additional people, it may be that some of the offices will have to be split up. Certainly in my area, if they eliminated the Niagara Peninsula from the Golden Horseshoe area right around Hamilton, it would assist very much.

1340

CARABRAM

Mr. Callahan: I would like to extend an annual invitation to the members of the Legislature and to residents all over Ontario who are viewing this House today to a cultural festival event in Brampton called Carabram. The opening ceremonies will take place on June 30 at the Lester B. Pearson Memorial Theatre in Brampton.

Presently we have 16 pavilions. We have English, Irish, Indian, Canadian, Polish, Ukrainian, Filipino, Hawaiian, Chinese, Greek, Scottish, Portuguese, German, Croatian, Caribbean and Italian pavilions. It gets enlarged every year. The people who are in charge of it are planning on adding one for Israel and also one for the Arab nations.

I invite all the people here today either to attend the opening celebrations on June 30 at the Lester B. Pearson Memorial Theatre or to attend on July 3, July 4 or July 5. It will be a delightful weekend. Members can savour the sights, sounds and tastes of the tremendous multicultural activities in the great city of Brampton.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

Mr. Gillies: This government's lack of financial commitment to the environment was more than evident in its latest budget. Compared to overall provincial spending, the environment got nothing; it is still receiving only one per cent of total provincial expenditures.

In November 1985, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) told this House that "all the commitments that this government has indicated during the election campaign and prior to that are commitments that will be met." This minister has not fulfilled those commitments.

One laughable figure is the \$14 million to assist municipalities in assessing the condition of their sewage treatment facilities. We already know the problem that exists here. What the minister has to do is get on with the job. This program has no merit without a companion capital-improvement program.

The minister is telling municipalities: "We will tell you what the problem is. Now you fix it." The \$14 million over three years is not a

substantial sum of money. The minister has to make a substantial commitment and bring forward an infrastructure program for this province.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I would like to bring to the House's attention the passing last Sunday—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Is this a ministerial statement?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: No.

Mr. Speaker: Are you asking for unanimous consent?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Excuse me. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: May I mention the subject matter?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: It is on the passing of Dr. Richard Hearn.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Agreed to.

DR. RICHARD HEARN

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I would like to bring to the House's attention the passing last Sunday of a great citizen of this province and one of the pioneers of Ontario's energy system, Dr. Richard Lancaster Hearn.

Dr. Hearn had a long and distinguished life, containing achievements that would have done credit to several careers.

Whenever I visited Dr. Hearn at his home in Niagara Falls along the Niagara River Parkway, I had the sense that I was in the company of a visionary and a true pioneer. I know that word is somewhat overused these days, but it was completely appropriate in the case of Dr. Hearn. He was among the group affectionately known as "Beck's bright boys." This group was responsible for the creation of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario, the forerunner of Ontario Hydro.

Dr. Hearn was also responsible for the design and construction of many of Ontario's hydroelectric installations, including the first large hydroelectric project, the Queenston-Chippewa power development. Just three weeks ago, I had the opportunity to participate in the official opening of the Eagle River dam near Dryden, which was originally designed by Dr. Hearn about 70 years ago. It is a tribute to his skills that many of these dams are being refurbished and used again.

Dr. Hearn was with Ontario Hydro off and on from 1913 to 1956 and spent another 20 years as a

distinguished consulting engineer. Back in the 1950s, Dr. Hearn was instrumental in Ontario's decision to move towards nuclear generating stations, which now provide some 40 per cent of the power in this province.

During his long and successful life, Dr. Hearn saw many changes in Ontario. History will say that the credit for a great many of these changes, which contribute so much to the way of our life today, is owed to him.

I will remember Richard L. Hearn as one of our most distinguished citizens. Born in the last century, he passed away in his 97th year, but his memory will live on for many years. Our sympathies are expressed to Dr. Hearn's family.

Mr. Swart: I had the privilege to know Dr. Hearn quite well. I sat with him for a number of years on the board of governors at Brock University. I want to join with the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio) in paying tribute to him.

From my point of view, after associating with him for some period of time, the quality I remember the most was his unassuming nature. He was a man who was not pretentious in any way. He was easy to talk to, a very decent human being. I am aware too of his accomplishments with Ontario Hydro. I am aware of the fact that he had a very great dedication to that institution. He was a man who believed that hydro should be provided by a public institution. He was a great believer in the government assuring that services that could be better provided by the government should be provided by the government.

He was not only the kind of man whom I think anyone would be proud to know as a personal friend but also the kind of man who was a dedicated and very competent public servant. Therefore, I am pleased to pay tribute to him today, both in a personal way and for the service he gave to this province, and to express my sympathy and the sympathy of this caucus to his wife and family.

Mr. Grossman: Might I just briefly join my colleagues in the other two parties in noting the passing of one of the great pioneers of Ontario Hydro.

I must say that I was listening carefully to the comments of the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) as he commented on the enormous contribution made by Dr. Hearn, who was one of those who persuaded the government and Ontario Hydro to move into nuclear energy. I was hoping the member might acknowledge that. I know the minister was listening as well.

Indeed, Dr. Hearn will be long remembered—long after many of the people in the elected arena and many of their contributions, I must say—for his foresight and his ability to peer into the future and persuade his colleagues, in what must surely have been a difficult environment, to make sure that Ontario Hydro was looking forward and meeting the future needs. It is easy for us, and we engage in it daily here, to have a retrospective look at Hydro's mistakes. We have the right and obligation to do that. However, for those who worked at Ontario Hydro and had the foresight to make the right decisions ahead of time, that indeed is a lot more difficult and merits a lot more credit.

On this day, I should like to join my colleagues in the other two parties in noting the enormous contributions and foresight and dedication of one of the energy pioneers of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: On behalf of all the members, I will make certain that a copy of Hansard is sent to the Hearn family showing your words of sympathy.

1350

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

CONSUMER REPORTING

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to announce my intention to introduce for first reading today an act to amend the Consumer Reporting Act.

The purpose of these amendments is to prevent any access to a consumer's credit file without his or her knowledge. The new provisions would require that the prescreening of credit files, or any derivative thereof, be treated as a consumer report and the affected consumers be notified before any unsolicited search could be conducted.

Prescreening refers to a search of credit bureau files by credit granters or consumer reporting agencies to select potential customers for solicitation. Prescreening can involve the submission of a list of names and the specific age, income, marital status, creditworthiness and other criteria to be used in identifying the potential target market for direct solicitation.

The amendments are necessary to ensure the integrity of consumers' credit files. I urge all members to support these amendments.

RESPONSE

CONSUMER REPORTING

Mr. Swart: I want to comment on the statement that has just been made to the effect, first of all, that it will be nice for people to know

when their personal file is being looked over by salespeople or people representing companies that want to sell products to them or for any other reasons.

I would like to say to the minister, though, that I am sure all of us in this party would have been a lot happier if the legislation had provided for consumers to have the right to prevent all this personal information from being accumulated and put on file for somebody to look at.

Second, it seems to me we would have liked to see that consumers would have to give permission if this information were going to be used. The fact is now that all they will do is know. They will not be able to make any impact whatsoever on how this information is being used by these people. A lot of this private information is being given out to people who should not have it.

I suggest to the minister, if he wanted to do something real, he would have gone those next two steps instead of just letting people know that somebody is going to have access to all the personal information that should not be there in the first place.

ATTENDANCE OF PREMIER

Mr. Grossman: Both of my questions were for the Premier (Mr. Peterson) today. We were informed quite clearly, both by way of his public agenda and this morning, that he would be here today. I wonder if the House leader could help us in this problem.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: All I can say is that I was informed he would not be.

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The agenda that is given out clearly indicates that the Premier is going to be here. It indicates that he is at a black-tie dinner tonight, another one tomorrow night and another one Thursday night. He has time for a warmup out on the lawn tomorrow. He has not been here for half the question periods.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Oh come on, he rarely misses.

Mr. Gillies: When he is here, he will not answer questions anyway. He refers them to other ministers. He refers them to anybody.

Mr. Harris: Even when he is not here, there are only eight ministers of the crown in the House; nine now.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to stand down the question?

Mr. Grossman: No, the Premier has not been here for 50 per cent of the session. In the absence, once again, of the Premier—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is not correct.

Mr. Grossman: It is correct. He was here for the Order of Ontario, he was here for the budget, he was here for the throne speech, but when question period is here, he is absent. He has been absent 50 per cent of the time.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: In view of the continuing absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), my question is to the Treasurer. Yesterday, in dealing with what is clear on table C6 in his budget—that is, a decline in the total amount of transfers to the school boards—the Treasurer indicated to us that, notwithstanding the way the budget had been outlined, he had a 12 per cent cash advance scheduled for the school boards for this coming year, even though his budget indicated zero.

True to his word, we called the ministry to check on this and—just so that we will know the source—Kathy Bouey, director of the finance policy branch, informed us that, yes, indeed, a 12 per cent advance has been built into the grant and that it is the minister's intention to free-flow the money.

Will the Treasurer not agree that if we take the 12 per cent, as we must, from the total announced in transfers to school boards, it then turns out that a proper description in the budget would indicate that the general legislative grants this year will decline from \$3.3 billion to \$3.1 billion, and that the grant flow improvement, as he calls it, would be reinstated at about \$400 million to reflect the 12 per cent? If all this information from Kathy Bouey is correct, would the Treasurer not agree that his GLGs will decline by \$144 million?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Ms. Bouey and I agree entirely on the interpretation of these numbers. The honourable Leader of the Opposition knows of her reputation in these matters and Ontario is very fortunate in having her on the staff of the Treasury. I believe that perhaps the member himself may have hired her. It was during his time that she came on the staff. We agree on this. There is some easy confusion in this regard.

I would suggest to the member and to other honourable members that the way to read table C6 is simply to look at general legislative grants as they were in 1985-86 at \$3.178 billion, and as at the end of 1986-87 the interim transfers were \$3.323 billion, and as we expect them to be during this fiscal year, \$3.579 billion. The \$330 million is a one-time advance which, in fact,

establishes the 12 per cent cushion for as long as we want to draw it down.

The honourable member has asked the question four times and I guess this is about the third time I have said it was either during his treasurership or that of one of his colleagues that the former cushion, which was seven per cent—even 12 per cent is really not adequate for the needs of the school boards—was drawn down as a budgetary measure to three per cent. We have restored it on a one-time basis, which is sufficient to maintain the cushion until any other budgetary decision is made. I hope we can improve it next year.

Mr. Grossman: If the Treasurer decides to stop hiring an extra 1,000 civil servants every year, he will have lots of money to improve it. However he wants to fog it, let us be clear: he and Kathy Bouey agree on one thing and that is, the 12 per cent advance flow, as he calls it, is built in to the \$3.5 billion that he reports in his budget. That is not a matter of dispute. He has acknowledged that twice now.

The only point I make is that last year the Treasurer did not report that on the first line. This year he reported it as part of his GLGs. Will the Treasurer this afternoon simply not agree that if he takes out the grant flow improvement this year and lists it separately, as he did last year, the GLG portion indicates a decline of \$144 million year over year? That is simply a matter of mathematics and it is his staff's mathematics.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Responding to the honourable member's question, I wonder whether, when he is concerned about staff increases, he feels the 418 additional staff members for young offenders were inappropriately hired. Does he believe the 191 staff members for our psychiatric hospitals were inappropriately hired? Does he believe the 187 people hired for social housing were inappropriately hired?

I simply point out that the honourable member likes to ask questions where he is dealing with about 10 issues at once and, when he gets up for his second supplementary, one may be sure he will deal with two or three issues. If it is appropriate for him, I cannot see why it is not appropriate for me.

I have responded to the member's question repeatedly and I cannot make it any clearer to the honourable gentleman than I already have. I invite him to discuss it further with our mutual friend and, in a sense, mutual adviser Ms. Bouey, who has confirmed my interpretation of this, as the honourable member may feel she has

confirmed his. Right now she works for me and she says I am right.

1400

Mr. Grossman: Let me tell the Treasurer he will get lots of chances to tell us where those 5,000 civil servants went. He can answer for the \$275 million spent on civil servants.

Let me make this point. I do not dispute that Kathy Bouey is right. I agree that she is right. I agree that she agrees with the Treasurer. The point Kathy Bouey is making is that the Treasurer has inflated his GLGs by taking the grant flow improvement and working it back into the GLGs. The net result of all that is incontrovertible. The Treasurer ends up in a circumstance where his GLGs have been reduced by \$144 million.

Mr. Speaker: The question.

Mr. Grossman: The school boards are getting \$144 million less this year under the GLGs and his total grants to the schools have been reduced.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Grossman: Just to give the Treasurer an opportunity to end this debate once and for all, my final supplementary is: When the Treasurer totals up all his grants to school boards as listed on table C6, would he not agree that the total transfers to school boards, all in, are lower this year than last year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member mentioned the jobs again. I will refrain from following his lead and dealing with a second subject in the question, although I am quite prepared to do so.

Mr. Grossman: There is only one question. Answer the school board question.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The school boards were delighted that we not only restored what was taken from them but also added substantially to it. The honourable member will realize that since we took office, the actual operating grants for our school boards have been increased by more than 25 per cent.

Mr. Grossman: Wait until they get the truth.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: His revenues were up 31 per cent and the school boards got 25 per cent.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Just in case the member is not aware, that completes the first question. Second question, the Leader of the Opposition.

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, I see the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is still not with us for the

second question for, once again, another question period.

Mr. Speaker: To which minister?

Mr. Grossman: In view of the continuing absence of the Premier, I will come back to the government House leader. As he will recall, last Thursday this House voted in a free vote, not a whipped vote, to have the kind of public hearings on the Meech Lake accord that Quebec has had.

He will also know that in the last day there has been a distinguished group of Canadians who have been urging the Premiers to look carefully and to analyse more quickly the arrangement before the Meech Lake accord is finalized.

In view of all that, would the government House leader explain today why he and the government still refuse to give public hearings to the people of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: What do you call this?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The interjections of my honourable colleague are correct. We are having a debate in the Legislature today in which the Leader of the Opposition is going to express to the Legislature his views and the views of those Conservative-minded citizens in the province. The New Democratic Party will have a similar opportunity and the government will put forward its position.

I think he is also aware that the Prime Minister has called a meeting of the first ministers, which at one time I understood was to be scheduled about June 11. It has been moved up—and I am not sure about this—I believe to June 2. The Premier very properly felt he wanted to have the views of the members of the Legislature, or at least the principal spokespersons for the two opposition parties, before he went up to confer with his colleagues.

We hope and trust that when the order of business is called this afternoon and when that work is finally adjourned, the Premier will know the views of the two opposition parties and, thus fortified, will be able to go to Ottawa with his colleagues and carry on those discussions and, I hope, come to some finality. I will let it go at that for now.

Mr. Grossman: The group calling for some more thought was quoted yesterday as saying it was worried that the implications of the accord are so little understood that rushing it into place could be a mistake. This group includes Eugene Forsey; Harry Arthurs; Liberal Party leader Sharon Carstairs from Manitoba; former Liberal candidate Doris Anderson; Farley Mowat; June Callwood; Eddie Greenspan; Carl Goldenberg,

adviser to former Prime Minister Trudeau on constitutional matters; Desmond Morton and Albert Breton. This is an impressive list of Canadians asking only that more thought and care be taken so that everyone understands the implications.

Given that the Quebec government has had two weeks of very important public hearings where a lot of information has come out, and given the fact that yesterday the Toronto Star carried an advertisement calling for public hearings in front of a standing committee of this Legislature on truck transport reform, would the Treasurer not agree that public hearings on the Meech Lake accord are at least as important as truck transport reform?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I simply reiterate that the Prime Minister has called this meeting of first ministers and there is not a person here who wants to detract from the importance of that meeting and what will flow from it. The Leader of the Opposition, the other ministers and members are also aware that whatever decision is arrived at by the first ministers will come to the House of Commons and the various legislatures for ratification or otherwise. At that time, the full and precise wording of the agreement, if there is an agreement, will be before all members. We will have had a chance to research it. We will then have a chance to debate it here and, I trust, ratify it.

We have to remember that this is an opportunity to bring our sister province of Quebec back into the ambit of Confederation, a tremendous achievement and accomplishment for which the Prime Minister and the Premiers, in my view, deserve the highest compliments. It is a matter of concern to us that the meeting called by the Prime Minister of Canada not be delayed. The honourable member is well aware that full discussion on the ratification of any agreement that might flow from that is the responsibility of this House.

Mr. Grossman: If ever there were an elitist view of society and the parliamentary system, the Treasurer represents that elitist view. The government that came in saying "No walls, no barriers," is the single government in central Canada that refused public hearings, that thumbbed its nose at the Legislature of this province democratically and openly voting for public hearings, and then gave a snub of the nose saying, "Here in Ontario there is not enough time," but in Quebec there was two weeks for public hearings.

Mr. Mackenzie: Question.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Final supplementary.

Mr. Grossman: Would the Treasurer not agree that, given the disagreement between the Premier of Ontario and the Premier of Quebec, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs for Quebec and the Attorney General of Ontario (Mr. Scott) on some of the key provisions of the constitutional accord at Meech Lake, there is adequate opportunity and time immediately to call for public hearings in the balance of this week and next week before the June 2 meeting?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would not agree. I listened very carefully to the comments made by Mr. Bourassa—I believe it was on the CBC news or perhaps The Journal last night—in which he indicated he was going to the meeting of first ministers with the expectation that an agreement would be reached, but he wanted to see—

Mr. Grossman: And he had public hearings. He was good enough to have hearings. He is more of a democrat than you are.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is right. Chacun à son goût. He wanted to go to Ottawa to find the precise wording.

I must admit that when the honourable member raised Eugene Forsey's name, he got my attention because I have a very high degree of admiration for his ability and certainly for his career of service. I had the temerity to consult with Dr. Forsey on the constitutionality, if that is not too high-flown a word to use, of another agreement to which I was a party. I thought his advice at that time was admirable. Without his support, I would have been hesitant to go forward with it.

1410

Mr. Grossman: Why would you not hear from him now?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have heard from him. He says it is historic and not too high a price was paid.

Mr. Grossman: He does not say that. That is why we need public hearings.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition and the Treasurer have had ample time to debate.

Mr. Laughren: Ten minutes of questions.

Mr. Speaker: That is right.

LIBERAL-NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY ACCORD

Mr. Rae: I am delighted the acting Premier chose to mention the accord in his last answer about Dr. Forsey. We all share great admiration for Dr. Forsey. Since the Treasurer mentioned the accord, I know he will have it fresh in his mind.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have it right here.

Mr. Rae: I am delighted the Liberals have finally discovered the document and have realized what it means.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not bring it every day.

Mr. Rae: The fact that the Treasurer does not bring it every day is quite obvious to everybody; neither does the government. I wonder whether I can ask the Treasurer to have a look at this part of the accord. Perhaps this article can be sent over to the Treasurer, please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Wait a minute. Is it the accord or not?

Mr. Rae: No. It refers to the origins of a document in the accord. We are talking about severance pay, about plant closures and about what is happening to workers in—

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: No. I am asking the Treasurer since he was the one who helped to negotiate the document and since he is the government House leader responsible for House business.

Since the Premier (Mr. Peterson) told us on April 12, 1985, referring to the Burns meat plant, that the Liberals would have forced Burns to justify closing, can the Treasurer tell us why, some two years after the Premier made that promise, some two years after that promise was signed again by him in an accord, we still do not have any legislation, either proposed, discussed, prepared or ready on any agenda, to deal with the question of what happens to workers when their plants close?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Minister of Labour has the answer to that question.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I thank my colleague the Treasurer for giving me the opportunity to answer this question. The government has been working very hard at putting together a package of new protections for workers in the event of plant closures.

The issue is a very troubling one. While we created virtually a record number of jobs in this province last year and while the employment situation in this province continues to be very strong—6.4 per cent unemployment last month

comes to mind, the lowest level in some period of time—there are a number of very troubling plant closures. We want to make sure that we have in place employee adjustment programs that will help workers in those situations. I expect to be able to come forward to this House with proposals in that regard in the not-too-distant future.

[Applause]

Mr. Rae: That is the same applause and the same statement that the minister made last year and that he has been making for the last year and a half. He has lost all credibility in this House on that question.

With respect to another accord item also contained in document 3 with respect to employment equity, can the minister tell us whether the “I count” survey with respect to the public sector has been completed? If it has been completed, when will it be released? If it is going to be released, can he tell us when the government is going to bring in some employment equity programs that will deal with the problems of women, visible minorities and the disabled in this province when it comes to getting a job?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I cannot tell the honourable gentleman when all the final details of the “I count” survey will be ready. We have had a number of meetings and some tentative conclusions have been reached. I can tell the honourable member that my colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), myself and a number of ministers have been working very actively on employment in the whole area of employment equity. The government considers the matter to be an important one, and we will come forward through cabinet with proposals as soon as they are fully developed.

I can say, however, the government thinks it is of tremendous importance to ensure, even as we bring forward employment equity programs in the province, that employment equity ought to start right here in the government, and ever since we became the government two years ago we have been working very hard in that regard.

Mr. Rae: The third question—perhaps we can make it strike 3 for the minister—is with respect to workers’ compensation. I guess the basic point is that these are all items established in the accord signed by the Premier and these are all areas that the Premier said yesterday would be moved on. Can the minister tell us, if the government is doing so much in these areas, why there are no bills, no pieces of legislation and no discussions among House leaders with respect to any of these items? If the government is doing its job, why

have the people of this Legislature and the people of Ontario not seen any sign that this is what it is doing? They are study-mad.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The honourable member raised the issue of workers' compensation, so let me answer in that regard. The honourable member seems to have forgotten the fact that this government moved forward and provided automatic indexing of workers' compensation pensions. The honourable member seems to have forgotten that in the less than two years we have been in government, we have opened three new regional offices and intend to open a fourth.

The honourable member seems to have forgotten that we have or will have shortly a total of 12 offices of worker adviser and that we have over 50 worker advisers. The honourable member seems to have forgotten that we have the office of employer adviser in some six communities. The honourable member seems to have forgotten the Industrial Disease Standards Panel is up and running.

In short, there has been a lot of reform and there will be even more.

Mr. Rae: The minister has not produced any legislation for this House to discuss on any of the items in the accord which are outstanding. That is the record of the Minister of Labour. That is why he ought to resign.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I wonder whether the minister brought his budget with him today. Perhaps he did or did not; I do not know.

The minister apparently told the Toronto Star yesterday, after I said it would take 40 years at the current rate, that he will soon be announcing details of the government's three-year plan for child care which will be "much more extensive" than what has been announced so far, and that "it will take at least 10 years to provide the 100,000 additional child care spaces."

Can the minister confirm this figure of the new 10-year plan? Is that the new plan? Can he confirm that what it means for a family with a couple of kids, for example—or perhaps I can speak personally of three kids under the age of five and a half—is that we have to wait until our oldest daughter is 15 and a half until we have child care that is accessible to people in the province? Was the minister not telling people with young families that they have to wait until they are in high school before he is going to provide child care?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In response to the honourable member's question yesterday, I indicated that the amounts that were announced in the budget and were clearly stated as such were interim amounts while other negotiations and discussions were going on. There was also a statement in the throne speech that the policy statement of the government with respect to child care would be released shortly after the budget. That is an ongoing process and that will take place.

The point I made with respect to the three years was something I have said before, that we intend to make a proposal in three-year cycles. The reporter asked me the question about the 100,000 spaces, and I said that could take up to a decade. That was the comment I made.

1420

Mr. Rae: I think the answer to my question was, yes, families have to wait until their kids are in high school before there is a child care space available for them.

If the minister is planning all kinds of additional moneys being spent that were not announced in the budget, if that is what he is saying, can he give us an absolute guarantee that none of the \$275 million that has to be cut from the government's budget in operating expenses and the \$75 million in capital expenses that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is asking him to cut will be coming out of the minister's budget?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: To the best of my knowledge, none of that will be coming out of my budget.

Mr. Rae: How much additional money of Ontario's money is he planning to spend? Where is it contained anywhere in the budget statement released by the Treasurer? If the money that is at the bottom of the column here, the \$275 million that has to be cut and the \$75 million in capital that has to be cut, is not coming out of his budget, whose budget does the minister think it is going to come out of?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: My understanding of the Treasurer's comment is that across the entire government, by the end of the fiscal year, every minister has some programs that have not been totally expended. The expectation is that there will be that sum of money left by the end of the fiscal year. That is my understanding of what it has meant to me.

ATTENDANCE OF PREMIER

Mr. Pope: That is a typical definition of Liberal budgetary policy. That sure is.

Mr. Speaker: The member has a question for which minister?

Mr. Pope: I have a question for the Premier (Mr. Peterson) actually, but in his continued absence—he is always there in the good times. He is always there with his red tie on for the Meech Lake agreement, but the people do not have a say in it.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The honourable member refers again to the absence of the Premier from question period. I want to tell him that any indication of the Premier's absence is incorrect. He has been here 11 of 16 sitting days.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We will just wait.

New question, the member for Cochrane South, to which minister?

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Pope: In the continued absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I want to put my question to the Treasurer. It is obvious that when he is here the Premier will not defend the budget, so it is left to the Treasurer to defend the indefensible.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. Pope: We have had an increase in layoffs under the Liberal government of this province of 48 per cent in northeastern Ontario last year over the previous year and 250 per cent in northwestern Ontario last year over the previous year, under the Liberal administrative policies.

At the very time when the mining profits tax revenues have increased from \$55 million to \$121 million last year, in an industry that is in serious economic trouble with massive layoffs in northern Ontario, I want to know why the Treasurer saw fit to return only \$5 million to that industry.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member may be referring to the announcement that the Mining Tax Act will not be applied to any new mines for the first three years. We think that is a stimulus to the mining industry in northern Ontario.

The honourable member will also know of a wide spectrum of government programs designed to improve the employment situation in

the north. The unemployment level is undoubtedly worse than anywhere else in the province. As a matter of fact, it is as much as four percentage points higher, on average, than it is elsewhere.

The honourable member will know that last year 125,000 net new jobs were established in the province, many of them in northern Ontario.

Mr. Pope: I am glad the Treasurer, in the absence of the Premier, talked about employment programs and policies for northern Ontario, because his ministers and his government have refused to tell us what they are for the last year.

The Minister of Northern Development and Mines, who also happens to be the Premier, said on February 10 that he was not aware of any employment programs in his ministry to help the miners in northern Ontario. I refer the Treasurer to page R-535, where he will find that those are the Premier's exact words as Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Mr. Tieman had to explain to the committee and to him that there was less than \$300,000 for employment of northern Ontario's laid-off miners and less than 25 miners were being employed. Does the Treasurer think that is an adequate response to the layoffs in northern Ontario, less than 25 jobs created by this government's employment strategy?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member is, I suppose, contributing to unemployment by holding down two jobs himself. He practises law whenever he has a client waiting in the outer room and comes down here when there is nothing else to do.

I would also tell you, Mr. Speaker, of something that, unfortunately, the honourable member seems to have overlooked, and that is the movement of government jobs into the north.

Mr. Pope: It is not helping a single miner.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: All right, but there is a firm commitment for 1,200 jobs with a \$40-million payroll. I can assure the House that the honourable member is out of touch with the electorate if he thinks they do not appreciate it.

Mr. Pope: So to hell with the miners. Is that your answer?

Mr. Speaker: The member for Cochrane South has already asked a question. Order. The member for Windsor-Riverside would like to ask a question.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: We will just wait. If members wish to waste the time this way, that is fine.

SEVERANCE PAY

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. Last Saturday evening I walked on an information picket line in Windsor at the ACP store, which was formerly owned by Dominion, where I spoke to a woman who has worked for that company for 31 years. She has 23 years' seniority, because she had eight years when she raised her family. She is now losing her job, along with 45 other full-time employees—many of whom also have seniority of over 20 years with that company—and 110 additional part-time employees are losing their jobs. They will get zero in severance pay from that company, and the company refuses to negotiate severance pay or a close-out package.

Does the minister think that is fair? If he does not think it is fair, why will he not bring in legislation to protect workers like these?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am pleased to advise that the honourable member's information is wrong. I can tell the honourable gentleman that as a part of a recent ruling in a similar chain close-out in Kitchener, in terms of the so-called count to get to 50 employees, both full-time and part-time employees are counted.

There are 41 or 45 full-time employees in this ACP closure in Windsor, and there are over 100 part-time; so the count is well over 50. All those full-time employees who meet the requirements of over five years—including, obviously, the lady the member is speaking about—will be given at least the minimum severance pay. I am told the company has now agreed with the views the ministry had given to it on this matter.

In terms of the part-time employees, I can tell the honourable member there has been a ruling, which was confirmed in the Kitchener case, that so-called elect-to-work employees are not eligible for severance pay. That is one of a myriad of issues we have been reviewing, as we review the current severance pay laws and attempt to tighten them up.

1430

Mr. D. S. Cooke: If that is the case, that is good news for the 45 employees who are full-time employees. But as of Sunday of this week, the union was not aware of this. The ministry had been contacted and asked, and the workers were told they would have to challenge these kinds of decisions, rather than having universal legislation that protected the workers so they did not have to fight for their rights in the courts.

I would like to ask the minister, why will he not bring in the legislation which he advocated to the Conservative Party when he was the ordinary member for Windsor-Sandwich, the Labour critic for the Liberal Party—when he was not in government? If it was good enough then, why is it not good enough now?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I remember when my honourable friend was the ordinary member for Windsor-Riverside; now I read he may want to be the mayor of Windsor. How times change.

The matter is not as clear-cut as the honourable gentleman would suggest. As he would know, under the Employment Standards Act there are a number of legal challenges open to both employers and employees. The branch simply advised the workers that the company, because of the recent ruling, could challenge an order to pay.

I want to assure the honourable member of two things. First, I am told the company has now agreed with the advice our ministry had given it and severance pay will be payable to the full-time employees. Second, I can tell the honourable member we are working very hard to bring in a severance pay law that closes the very many loopholes in the loophole-riddled law the previous government brought in in 1981.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Pope: Now that we have established this government is going to do nothing to help the mining industry—in the words of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) it is going to do nothing to help the laid-off miners—

Mr. Speaker: The question is to which minister?

Mr. Pope: In view of the absence of the Premier, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

I want to turn to another Liberal government fiasco that is affecting the workers of northern Ontario. We have now established clearly the minister's complicity, which he denied for six months, in the softwood lumber issue. We have now clearly established his conduct and how he covered this up for six months; now we know.

On April 29, the Premier was quoted as saying that \$30 million for the heritage fund would be found from the softwood lumber taxes. The Premier also said on January 8 to Bill Walker, as reported in the *Toronto Star*, that the lumber export tax would be used exclusively to retrain the laid-off forest products workers. Which of the Premier's statements is true? Is it being used

for the heritage fund or for a retraining program for laid-off lumber workers?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I think what really upsets this member from the north is that it was this Premier and this government that really stood up against the federal government on behalf of that tax.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I will not use the 42 years today. I had better leave that alone.

I can tell the member from the north we will be looking at what revenues are derived from those figures and we will be using them to help the people of the north.

Mr. Pope: That is the same vague promise we heard from this minister over a year ago. What really bothers us is that we have a Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in this province who is not only not doing two jobs, who is not only not doing one job for the people of northern Ontario, he is not doing any job at all, and neither is the minister.

The minister stood by and agreed to the softwood lumber tax in writing on September 28 and then he tried to deny it for six months. He was behind it every step of the way. Sleight of hand, misrepresentation, lies, the whole bunch of them are the same. When is he going to employ the laid-off lumber workers? When is he going to put retraining programs in place?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: Again, I can tell the member from the north that I have had occasion over the last several months to travel many times to the north and the opinion he tries to give this House and what we really find up there are very different. They are very pleased with what this government is doing and what this Treasurer is doing.

Mr. Martel: It is going to be a delight to fight the Liberals on this budget in the north. It is an absolute nothing. If there was ever a nothing budget for the north, that was the one.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Martel: I have a question to the minister responsible for the swamp, the Minister of Labour; the swamp-tender. My understanding was that Dr. Muir, his buddy, was to resign from any consultation with the Workers' Compensation Board, to determine eligibility of workers suffering industrial disease, if he was to serve on the Industrial Disease Standards Panel. My understanding is that was the agreement. Can the minister tell me why the board has referred a worker from de Havilland to Dr. Muir of the

Firestone Clinic as of April 1 of this year for assessment?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am going to have to take a look at the specifics of the matter. It might have been useful, if the honourable gentleman really wanted an answer today, if he had given me some notice. I am told that Dr. Muir continues to see patients only in his professional capacity and will not be involved in terms of industrial disease and is not involved in matters that the panel either is or may be looking at. I will look into the specifics of the honourable gentleman's issue and get back to him.

Mr. Martel: I have before me a letter sent by Dr. Muir to a worker dated April 2, 1987, the original letter going from Dr. Carr to Dr. Muir and Dr. Muir writing directly to the worker at de Havilland, asking that worker to come at a specific time for an examination and advising the worker to bring his X-rays and to fill out a lengthy questionnaire.

Since Dr. Muir is one of those setting standards with which we assess workers' disabilities in this province, does the minister not consider it to be a conflict that Dr. Muir, on one hand, is setting the standards and, on the other hand, is adjudicating on behalf of the Workers' Compensation Board standards which he in fact might be involved in and his very presence on the panel itself. Are there not really two choices available?

Mr. Speaker: The question has been asked.

Mr. Martel: I hope we get into it, Mr. Speaker. I remember we spent 18 minutes on the first two questions today and you did not say a word, and I am talking about workers' lives.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martel: Will the minister agree that there is one of two choices? Either he asks—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think part of the question that I heard from the honourable gentleman—

Mr. Martel: The Speaker was interfering.

1440

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I have given the honourable gentleman a commitment that we will take a look at this matter and check whether the facts are as he has stated them. While I am on my feet, however, I do want to say that I hope the honourable member would be supportive of the general concept of an Industrial Disease Standards Panel and that he would be supportive of the concept of a panel which has balanced

membership. It seems to me the honourable member is very anxious to raise these matters involving specific people but not anxious, perhaps, in others.

I just tell the honourable member that we are trying to make the panel work. We will take a look at this matter. As far as I know, the issues involving the workers and involving de Havilland are not issues the panel has been asked to rule on in any way.

LANDFILL SITE

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. There has been a considerable process that has taken place in my community in terms of trying to locate a landfill site. It has taken a considerable period of time to narrow it down to what appears to be the question of the recognition by the regional council of one site, which is known as site 6.

As I understand it, an environmental assessment hearing is mandatory. I would like to ask the minister, since there seems to be some discussion around my riding that perhaps one of the sites that was in the running for the choice was removed because of political reasons, what would be the effect of the environmental assessment hearing if those facts were to be drawn before that hearing? Would it continue or would the matter come to an end and be investigated?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member may be aware that the environmental assessment process we have in Ontario is the most detailed and comprehensive one we have had in a long, long time. It takes into account all factors that might relate to the siting of a particular facility of this kind, and the Environmental Assessment Board, when it takes into consideration the representations which are made by various parties that appear before the board, is in a position to evaluate the matters the member has brought to the attention of the House today.

No doubt opponents and proponents will put forward their cases in the best possible manner as far as they are concerned and the board would then be in a position to make a judgement. One of the factors that is taken into consideration when there is a proposed and specific site is, of course, whether alternatives have been explored.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Davis: I have a question for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons. Does the minister believe it is fair that \$2 of every \$3 in Canada pension plan money is being

denied by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) to the 13,000 disabled in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: As the honourable member knows, questions of policy are decided in this instance by the Minister of Community and Social Services, and I will pass it on to him.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As I indicated to the leader of the official opposition yesterday, all of the CPP money was passed on to the disabled to whom it was sent. They all got that money.

Mr. Davis: One wonders why the Liberal government has a minister for the disabled when he cannot answer a very common question and finds it difficult to say whether it is fair or unfair. Perhaps he should resign.

Let us try him again.

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary?

Mr. Davis: I have to go back to the—

Mr. Speaker: The supplementary question must flow out of the response, and the response came from the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Mr. Davis: Thank you for the direction, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that.

Perhaps the minister can then state that the province made \$8 billion in additional revenues. The money for the disabled is their pension; the same money every person is entitled to if he becomes disabled. How can the minister justify denying the \$100 a month in badly needed benefits to those disabled persons?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am sure the honourable member knows that in terms of funding provisions by the two levels of government, there are three distinct groups of disabled people in this province: those who receive funds only from the province; those who receive funds only from the federal government through CPP, and those 13,000 who receive funds from both.

In terms of the province of Ontario's contributions, we have a single guaranteed annual income level for all disabled to whom we refer funds. It was our sense that it would be improper to have two different guaranteed annual income levels, one for 13,000 and a different one for the other 72,000 that the province supports. We therefore assessed the \$18 million that the federal government was flowing for CPP, which all went to those people, tripled that amount to \$54 million and distributed it to all 85,000 disabled who are receiving support from the province.

Mr. Davis: Do you mean that—\$1.65 a day? I would like to see you live on \$1.65 a day.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

ÉCOLE MONSEIGNEUR DE LAVAL

Mr. Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Education. The minister is aware of the situation at l'Ecole Monseigneur de Laval in Hamilton. His deputy visited the school and in some fashion has been involved with the separate and public boards' attempt to resolve the accommodation problem. It is now the end of May and it would appear that we have no solution yet.

Can the minister tell us at what point the rights of 370 francophone students will rise above the right of those two boards to local autonomy and at what point he will intervene to ensure that those 370 students have an acceptable facility in September?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank my friend the member for Hamilton Mountain for the question. Yes, I am aware of the situation. He is correct in observing that a number of officials from the Ministry of Education, including the deputy minister, have been involved to assist in and facilitate a local resolution.

I point out to my honourable friend that the assignment of students to schools is a matter that falls entirely within the jurisdiction of the local school board. I am cognizant that there have been some difficulties, but I am very hopeful that the reasonable men and women who sit on those Hamilton school boards are going to meet and discharge their responsibilities to those francophone students in the city of Hamilton.

Mr. Allen: Those are indeed fine words, but the minister may know that anyone who looks at the accommodation reports of the two boards in question would realize that if this question had been tackled jointly by the boards and the ministry and had not been left until the crisis hit the school in question, there would have been a resolution found that would not have the problems his policy of local decision-making is bringing about. In many board situations, re-criminations between boards, suspicion with regard to figures and a good deal of antagonism that is not necessary have developed.

Will the minister remove himself from that arm's-length policy that he adopted until his ministry, I think in the last six weeks, became actively involved, and locate for that school a self-contained and a permanent facility so that they will not become the wandering gypsies of the Hamilton school system?

Hon. Mr. Conway: My friend the member for Hamilton West knows perhaps better than anyone in this assembly the situation at Monsei-

gneur de Laval in Hamilton. I am sure that he, upon reflection, would perhaps want to distance himself somewhat from the polemic and the rhetoric of that supplementary question. He knows, as does the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie), that it is the exclusive responsibility of the local school board to assign students, particularly resident students who fall within its jurisdiction, to schools within that jurisdiction.

Yes, it is true that officials from the Ontario Ministry of Education have been assisting and will continue to assist the local boards to find a local resolution because it is quite clear that the jurisdiction here is entirely local.

1450

SPEECH THERAPISTS

Mr. Ferraro: I have a question for the Minister of Health and it pertains to speech therapists.

Last week, a young mother and her son came into my office with their physician. The minister will know this has been a problem in my community and perhaps in other communities in Ontario. The problem basically is he is a preschool child and desperately needs a speech therapist. I am sure he is of above-average intelligence. He is a bright, beautiful child. The availability of speech therapists is limited, to say the least. We have talked to the district health councils, hospital boards and so on and so forth. For the first time it is not a problem of money. It appears to be a problem of a shortage of personnel.

I wonder whether the minister could comment in two parts.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. Ferraro: Is this shortage widespread in Ontario? What can we do about it?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman has identified, as have several other members in this assembly, a very real and difficult problem for us. We have needs for a number of therapy practitioners that have been unmet in several parts of the area he has pointed out, particularly one important place: Guelph, Ontario. We are assessing how many positions are going unmet at the current time.

I have asked the people in my ministry to advise me with respect to where there may be other difficulties. I am sure people are aware that physiotherapists are in short supply. Speech pathologists and occupational therapists, all these people, are in short supply. In particular,

this problem imposes very difficult times in northern Ontario.

I have asked to see whether there are steps that I can take as Minister of Health to assist in funding positions in other centres or whether it may be a requirement of ours to look at the establishment of other facilities to train these therapy deliverers.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Warner: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I respectfully request that you consider the following points of order related to rule 29(a) and rule 29(i) of the standing orders. Based both on the standing orders and on the procedures adopted by this House, it seems to me that a minister basically has a choice of two paths when sitting in question period. A minister may respond as outlined in 29(a) or decline to respond as outlined in 29(i). It seems to me that if a minister chooses part (a), he has a certain obligation.

I point then to page 502 of Hansard, Thursday, May 14, in which the minister in response to my question said, "I will report back to him with further details on it within a few days." He took the question as notice. That was May 14. Twelve days later, there has been no answer, nor has there been any indication that there will be an answer.

What I am asking the Speaker to do is to take a look at both 29(a) and the precedents of this House to determine that if the minister has in fact chosen to answer, he then has an obligation to provide an answer. He certainly indicated on May 14 that he was intending to answer within a few days. As of today, I have no answer. I would like the Speaker to instruct the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) to respond.

Mr. Speaker: I have listened very carefully to the difficulty the member has encountered. I certainly appreciate what he said. However, his final comments were that I, as Speaker, should instruct the minister to respond. There is certainly nothing in the standing orders that allows me to instruct a minister. The member has made his point and no doubt the minister will respond in due course.

USE OF TIME IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Speaker: Because of the assistance I have had during this question period I thought that, particularly for the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel), I would inform the members of the

time that was taken for each question and response.

The first question and response took nine minutes; the second, eight minutes; the third, seven minutes; the fourth, six minutes; the fifth, four and a half minutes; the sixth, three and a half minutes; the eighth, four and a half minutes—that was the member for Sudbury East; the ninth, two and a half minutes; the 10th, four minutes; the 11th, three and a half minutes; and the 12th, two and a half minutes.

I was trying to be most fair to all members.

Mr. Martel: It is very difficult to make a comparison of nine minutes and four and a half with the Speaker intruding. That is the thing I was trying to draw to his attention.

ATTENDANCE OF PREMIER

Mr. Harris: The Speaker may also want to make a note of the fact that now that question period is over the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is back in the chamber.

Mr. Speaker: Many members, and particularly the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), who just stood on that point, may wish to read on page 103 of Beauchesne, standing order 316, "it has been sanctioned by usage that a member, while speaking, must not:...(c) refer to the presence or absence of specific members."

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CONSUMER REPORTING AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 73, An Act to Amend the Consumer Reporting Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to introduce for first reading An Act to Amend the Consumer Reporting Act. These amendments will prevent any access to a consumer's credit file without his or her knowledge. Under the new provisions, the prescreening of credit files, or any derivative thereof, would be treated as a consumer report and the affected consumers would have to be notified before any unsolicited search could be conducted.

I urge all members to support this amendment.

1500

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY ACT

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Shymko moved first reading of Bill 74, An Act to Proclaim Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Shymko: The purpose of the bill is to introduce a commemorative holiday as a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, whose contribution to the civil rights movement not only is recognized in the United States but also has affected all races throughout all countries, including Canada. It is also a tribute to the contribution of the black community of Ontario to the growth and prosperity of our province and our country.

REFERENDUM ACT

Mr. Runciman moved first reading of Bill 75, An Act to provide an Opportunity for the Electorate to Express its Views by Means of Referenda in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Runciman: The bill provides for the holding of a referendum on any question that is within the jurisdiction of the province to legislate. Such referenda would be held at the time of a general provincial election on the petition of persons representing eight per cent of the persons who voted in the last provincial general election.

The legislation represents one of the most significant and far-reaching changes in the provincial laws in this decade and will provide the electorate with an opportunity to require full public debate on issues of concern. We witnessed over the past few general elections a significant number of electors declining to exercise their franchise.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the member. It is an explanation not a debate of the bill.

CITY OF BARRIE ACT

Mr. Rowe moved first reading of Bill Pr45, An Act respecting the City of Barrie.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Hon. Mr. Peterson moved resolution 9:

That this House agrees with the agreement in principle on the Constitution signed by the Prime Minister and the 10 Premiers at Meech Lake on April 30, 1987.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am very pleased to be able to lead off the debate today to share my views with my colleagues opposite on the historic agreement that was reached at Meech Lake on April 30, which I believe will provide the foundation for Quebec to resume its rightful

and traditional role as a full partner in our Confederation.

I am also very pleased to have the views of my colleagues opposite and other members of the House as we proceed in the next few days to a formal meeting, presumably to ratify in a formal way the agreement reached on April 30. After that, we will have a full debate in this House and allow all members to express their views on the final wording that will be presented on June 2.

I should also tell my colleagues opposite that I was hoping we would have the final wording for today. Unfortunately, it is not available. There are still meetings of officials on this Friday, and the final touches will be put on Tuesday next. That at least is the current operating plan of the other first ministers, the Prime Minister and myself.

The agreement at Meech Lake was necessary to ensure that all Canadians in all regions can participate fully in their own institutions and know at the same time that their voices will be heard. The agreement was necessary if Canadians are to have a Constitution that can be adapted to changing times. Without Quebec's full participation, we could not realistically hope to change our Constitution in the future, keep up with new developments in our changing world and respond to our changing needs. This accord ensures that our Constitution does not become frozen in the status quo.

It was necessary to give full constitutional expression to the kind of nation we all live in and that we all love, a nation that has managed to retain its unique qualities despite the fact that we live next door to one of the most powerful countries on earth, however friendly it may be. The agreement was possible, I believe, because of much goodwill and leadership. In particular, I believe we owe a great deal to the efforts of the Prime Minister, to Premier Bourassa, to Premier Getty, who spoke forcefully for the west, and to my other colleagues as well.

Many people played a part in making this agreement possible, but I believe the most important part was played out 120 years ago by people sitting around another table, seeking balance and consensus and achieving unity. The Meech Lake agreement was possible only because it built upon traditions established in 1867.

I remind members that this country would never have come together if there had not been understanding human beings accommodating each others' needs. I remind members that at that time in our history there was agreement that

recognized some differences between Catholics and Protestants, between French and English. Yet they were able to put their differences aside, with no one getting everything he wanted, and reach a foundation of understanding and accommodation that has been the hallmark of this country for the last 120 years.

As I said, nobody got everything he wanted in 1867, but it was the foundation of compromise and understanding that formed the basis for our Constitution; indeed, the guiding principles for our evolving constitutional system.

Of course, through time there have been many other great contributions to the changes in our Constitution. I think of Prime Minister Trudeau, not too many years ago, Premier Davis and the other Premiers who established patriation of our Constitution and significant reforms after a very long period of time and effort.

The task of nation building began in 1867, but it certainly did not end in 1982. In the past year alone there has been extensive consultation and discussion among all governments. A year ago this month, the Quebec government clearly set forth the province's five constitutional concerns. The provincial Premiers stated publicly our intention to bring about Quebec's full participation in the Constitution at our annual meeting in Edmonton last August. The matter was on the agenda again last November at the annual meeting of first ministers in Vancouver. Officials of the federal government and all provinces met to review these issues in detail at a two-day meeting in Ottawa last March.

Earlier this year the federal Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations, Senator Lowell Murray, proposed specific approaches to reconciling Quebec's concerns. These extensive consultations, which led to the Meech Lake accord, were all accompanied by considerable public discussion. Indeed, for the past two or three months, the issues involved in constitutional reform have been the subject of intensive public debate.

One principle I believe that has been established in the Canadian mind is that constitutions can be changed. They cannot be changed frivolously but, nevertheless, we are not as a country wedded to the past. If there are better solutions for the future, then it is incumbent upon thoughtful men and women to search them out and work towards better institutions and better methods of solving our problems.

1510

Nous allons retenir de cet exercice un soubresaut vitale qui va permettre aux nombreuses idées qu'un pays comme le nôtre peut offrir de germer.

Nous ne serons plus prisonniers du passé. Si demain de meilleures solutions s'offrent à nous, nous aurons l'intelligence d'en profiter.

In our country, we need that kind of balance, that degree of flexibility, today more than ever. Canadians can ensure our place in the world only if we make our national diversity work for us rather than against us.

The agreement reached at Meech Lake is a classically Canadian one. It provides, in my view, for strength in diversity. It recognizes differences while affirming the advantages of being part of the whole.

The Meech Lake accord achieves three key objectives for Canadian federalism: (1) it allows Quebec to accept unequivocally the political legitimacy of all of our constitutional arrangements, (2) it indicates to other regions of Canada an understanding of deep underlying concerns and a willingness to deal with them expeditiously and (3) it commits the federal and provincial governments to regular consultative processes on economic and constitutional matters.

Canada's Constitution is being changed just enough to ensure that all Canadians across our country can accept its provisions and share in its protections, fully and equally.

This accord contains no radical departures. It reflects the basic Confederation settlement of 1867. It builds on the innovations of the Constitution Act of 1982. It recognizes commitments made during the great referendum debate, commitments to renew federalism, to re-examine our institutions and consider ways of accommodating the legitimate desires of people right across this country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and some of my colleagues who were in the House at the time to cast their minds back to the great referendum debate in this country, when we had an opportunity to examine the heart and soul of our country, the kind of accommodations we were prepared to make to each other to keep this country together. If we try to pick up some of those moments and put them in today's place, I think we will be proud of the fact that we made a promise in 1980 and we are keeping that promise in 1987.

Meech Lake represents constitutional reform that is a delicate balance of contending national, provincial and linguistic identities. These reforms will help governments to represent the Canadian people's views and to meet their needs.

With this agreement, we as Canadians are giving up the luxury of sterile argument. We are gaining the opportunity to talk to each other,

more calmly and more reasonably, so that we can hear each other's words as well as our own voices.

A number of questions have been raised with regard to the Meech Lake accord, both in this House and elsewhere in the country. I recognize the concerns that have been raised. I recognize that they stem from profound and well-meaning aspirations for long-term national wellbeing; but I believe these concerns have been addressed.

L'Ontario est en mesure de comprendre les inquiétudes suscitées par tel ou tel aspect de l'accord. C'est en soi un excellent signe de santé que la vigilance soit présente partout au pays. Mais c'est aussi en raison de cette vigilance que l'histoire devrait recevoir favorablement cette entente unanime.

I would like to share with the House what our intent was on several key items, which have prompted some of the questions that have been raised. In all cases, I am confident that the wording of Meech Lake reflects fully this intent. Officials are now in the process of preparing a draft constitutional text to give legal effect to that accord.

With regard to the federal spending power, the purpose of the provision is to provide constitutional legitimacy for its use in certain circumstances and to ensure a reasonable degree of flexibility for provinces.

The focus is on new federal shared-cost programs in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction and, may I point out again to my colleagues opposite, only in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. These are areas in which the federal government currently has no legal or constitutional authority to compel a province's participation.

Until now, provinces have had only two choices: to accept the federal conditions for payment whether or not they met their people's needs and receive the transfer from Ottawa; or to refuse the federal conditions, in which case the province was denied any transfer payment or money.

We are now providing a third option and thus adding to our national flexibility. A province can choose to opt out of a new federal program in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction and receive reasonable financial compensation from Ottawa. However, to exercise that option, the province must already be undertaking or agree to undertake its own program or initiative compatible with those national objectives.

If the national objective, for example, is to provide services for children, then the provinces

cannot offer a program based on wilderness parks or highways. I believe that intention is clearly understood by all my colleagues.

It will now be the federal government's task to devise programs that take every region's needs into account thoroughly enough that no province would want to exercise this option. To the extent that it is exercised, we will find a greater variety of compatible programs across the country all sharing the same national objectives.

Mr. Speaker, I remind you that this is a fact of our country today. Various provinces have different programs designed under the framework of national objectives. I refer, for example, to the Quebec pension plan, and health care systems in other provinces, that do, in general terms, subscribe to the national objectives but allow for some provincial flexibility.

The uniformity will be in the objectives; the flexibility in the program variety for their achievement.

The second area of comment has been on the provision allowing the federal and provincial governments to reach agreements on immigration-related matters. These agreements would be regarded as part of the Constitution and therefore could not be changed unilaterally by either government.

There are two key elements to understanding that provision:

1. The guarantee of the right to move anywhere in Canada in section 6 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will continue to apply to landed immigrants and those with refugee status. Mobility rights thus take precedence.

2. Parliament and the government of Canada will continue to be responsible for such matters as determining the overall number of immigrants and refugees and the base criteria for their admission to Canada. Agreements with provinces will proceed within the framework provided by these umbrella federal responsibilities.

A third item of the Meech Lake accord which has received attention is the interpretation clause, which recognizes Canada's linguistic duality and the distinctiveness of Quebec society. This clause merely recognizes a historical reality. In my view, it just conforms to a simple fact that is obvious to everyone in the country.

Quebec has always occupied a distinct place in Confederation by virtue of its history, linguistic makeup, legal system and culture. Indeed, the Constitution Act of 1867 contained a series of provisions which recognized Quebec's distinctive character. The agreement at Meech Lake is in keeping with that heritage.

The impact of this constitutional recognition will depend largely on judicial interpretation and evolving circumstances. I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that this is true of all aspects of our Constitution. In a constitutional democracy, politicians set a broad framework and the judiciary ensures that the laws conform to it.

1520

We have achieved our goals as a nation in the past only by creating a tradition of balance and flexibility. We will achieve our goals in the future only by building upon that heritage.

Many interests are involved in a delicate constitutional negotiation such as this one has been. Federal and provincial prerogatives have to be balanced. The interplay of our national English and French heritage has to remain in dynamic equilibrium and the objectives of the various regions must be harmonized.

The 1982 reform balanced the impact of a new charter and patriation on our national identity with a more consensual and equitable amending formula to respect our provincial identity. So also today we balance a sensitivity to regional and linguistic interests with a reaffirmation of a single national Constitution as the meeting point of our different hopes. The Meech Lake proposal is not only an act of reconciliation and bonding but also an act of allegiance. We have decided to work out our differences rather than to walk out on them.

S'il a été possible, en avril, de rapprocher tant de divergences, c'est que nous pourrions à nouveau recommencer. Ce rapprochement n'est pas qu'une réconciliation mais bien un acte de foi.

It is, in my view, a forward-looking agreement. The provisions for future constitutional conferences build in the flexibility that it needs to keep our Constitution alive—a living document for a country facing a challenge and an exciting future.

Governing Canada fairly and effectively is a continuing process of forging the national interest from different views and needs. Every generation must face the same basic challenges but does so in the particular circumstances of its own time. Each must find its own answers to these challenges.

I say to you in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, think back to April 30. What would have been the national reaction had we come back from Meech Lake without an agreement? I believe we would have dashed a lot of hopes. I believe there would have been a sense of failure in the country and the

question then would be raised, "If not now, when?" or "Will it ever be possible?"

I believe it was a good time to make the agreement that we did. It had been well prepared and well worked through. There were no surprises to anyone. We were operating in an atmosphere of relative calm in this country without any particular pressures. I believe it is an agreement coolly and rationally arrived at. I compare it again to what could have happened had this debate taken place five and a half or six years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I believe and I put to you that the first ministers' agreement at Meech Lake was a good one and very much in the national interest and in the interests of our children. I am very proud to have been a part of that. I am very proud to share that with my colleagues in the House.

I remember some of the great constitutional debates in this House. I remember the time of the patriation in 1982. For me, those were some of the highlights of being a member of this House, sharing our views, reaching out to each other, trying to provide an understanding of each other's views and to take that same understanding and translate that into the national will.

We have to think not only about Ontario's interest but about the national interest as well. I believe the first ministers, in a spirit of harmony, with leadership provided by the Prime Minister, were able to capture that magic moment. I commend it to my friends opposite. I am very interested in hearing their views, but I want to say again that I believe it is a very firm basis for renewing Confederation, not just now but in the future as well.

Mr. Grossman: In rising to join in this very important debate, I want to say to the members of this House that there are obviously many opportunities—indeed, most—when the primary purpose of each party is to advance its own interest and views on the political issues of the day. I hope this is not such a day. We in this party believe this debate should be different: different because of the subject at hand, Confederation, and different because it discusses, in essence, the way in which Canadians live together and the way in which they shall be governed.

I remind members that this parliament here in Ontario has a history of honest differences of opinion on Confederation: differences, I say to the Premier, which have traditionally fitted within a consensus about the kind of Canada Ontarians want for themselves, the kind of Canada Ontario governments should fight for, whatever their partisan affiliation.

As a matter of first principle, my colleagues and I are delighted the Prime Minister of Canada and his colleagues were successful in achieving an agreement in principle to bring Quebec into the Constitution. We want to see the province of Quebec join in the Constitution and charter legally, formally and willingly. We want to see the commitments with respect to free movement of capital, goods and people indeed apply in Quebec and be enforced in Quebec. We want to see the other provisions of the 1982 agreement apply in Quebec, not simply because the courts indicate that they shall, as indeed the courts have ruled over the past few years, but what is more significant because Quebec agrees to all that.

More significant, the Meech Lake agreement in principle achieves political legitimacy for these elements in Quebec. That surely is important to Canada and to our survival as a nation and our integrity as a people.

It was never my view or that of my colleagues, having sat through many discussions on constitutional revisions over the years, or our understanding or our experience, which goes back many years, that this kind of achievement could be made without some cost in terms of the final shape and scope of the agreement itself.

Indeed, let me say I was there and I remember the day very well when the Charter of Rights issue was first raised by the then Premier of this province, Mr. Davis. It was at a caucus session in the great city of Peterborough and there were many misgivings and much uncertainty with regard to what indeed it did hold. Certainly, those of us with legal backgrounds in particular had a lot of questions to ask.

But as the debate stretched over a period of months and indeed years, we came to understand better the give and take necessary in constructing a national agreement. I am proud to have been part of a cabinet that helped shape nationally the accord, the constitutional agreement of 1982, and to have lived through many, many cabinet meetings and many, many other meetings—myself and with my colleagues—discussing the concerns of other provinces and the tradeoffs and the difficulties in trying to shape a national deal.

Based upon that experience, may I say that I think we are fortunate in having a Prime Minister who has been able to reach out to the Premiers, who belong to the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party, the Conservative Party and the Social Credit Party, and bring them all together to shape this agreement, this accord, in this kind of consensus. Very few Canadians in public life have had such a degree of success in

the past or have had the particular focus on the conciliatory role of national government that produces this kind of agreement.

Members will recall the leadership exercised by Premier Robarts in seeking to open up the question of the quality and substance of our Confederation in the Confederation of Tomorrow Conference, which he organized, chaired and sponsored in 1967. That process, I am proud to say, opened up a substantive and meaningful dialogue between Quebecers and Ontarians which has thrived, despite the odd difficulties, for the past 20 years, and much of that dialogue can be traced right back to Premier Robarts's initiative in 1967.

Two decades later, we in this party counted among our successes on the broad question of Confederation the hard work and determination of Premier Davis, whose efforts were instrumental in achieving the repatriation of our Constitution and the Charter of Rights in 1982.

1530

It is fair to say that in the time of Premier Robarts, Ontario tended to side more with the provincial argument. In the late 1960s and 1970s, that was an appropriate counter-position to a national government that many Canadians had come to view as overly centralist and perhaps insensitive to legitimate provincial aspirations and concerns.

However, with the great changes of the 1970s, including the emergence of a separatist government in Quebec, Ontario decided, and I think quite rightly, to put strong central government and the survival of a national quality to our institutions at the very top of the list of Ontario's ranking of constitutional priorities.

There were some forces at work in western Canada and in Quebec at that time that would not have been displeased if the capacity of our national government to act on behalf of our nation's genuine national interest was reduced. But that trend has been reversed; it has not been reduced so far.

It was Premier Davis, I think, who said there was no value in a Confederation that confined the role of the government of Canada to that of a travel agent for the provinces. It is still in the philosophy of Progressive Conservatives in Ontario to support a strong central government for this Confederation. I believe most Ontarians, regardless of partisan political affiliation, share a philosophy of nationhood in that Conservative sense of having a strong central government.

My colleagues and I do not believe a nation is simply a hotel in which provinces happen to be

pursuing individual goals. Neither is our nation simply a league. A nation, I think it is fair to say, having mentioned two similes, really begs no simile, but if it is like anything it is surely more like a family which must have the capacity to act in concert to ensure for the family—all members of it—opportunity, excellence, freedom and equality.

It is very much a part of Canada's national definition that we pursue the task of self-definition on an ongoing basis. Our family nation, if I may call it that, with so few people spread so thinly across so huge a territory, faces immense challenges in securing its national survival, its sovereignty and any hope at meaningful consensus. Indeed, all of this is fundamentally important if a nation is something different from a league. All of this is fundamentally important if a nation is to have the ability to provide the same quality of education, the same quality of health care or the same quality of child care in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as it does in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

I simply want to express this concern today. I wonder whether, in the rush of the Meech Lake accord, we have sustained the family home that was so conserved and so carefully tended by the Fathers of Repatriation, if I may call them that, or have we converted Confederation into a hotel where provincial guests check in and check out at will?

In the one-day rush of the Meech Lake accord, have we in any way diminished the essence of what Trudeau, Davis, Chrétien, McMurtry and Romanow spent two years considering, building, protecting and debating? I was there for all of that time. I was part of the internal dialogue and part of the external dialogue, and as one of those not direct but indirect participants I think the country was better for that process, that process that lasted for two years but allowed discussion, development, analysis and understanding.

To many Canadians, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was a different thing by 1982, in terms of our understanding of its implications, than it was in 1980. The terms and conditions we talked about so often in 1980 and 1981, as we began the debate, were much different, at least in our understanding of them, by the time the Queen came to finish the repatriation. One wonders whether the efforts that took two years to crystallize and to mature should be altered overnight—literally overnight.

I have participated in this kind of thing and I appreciate the euphoria that can settle in. It can even begin to overtake events. I know of the

chemistry that sometimes begins in a room, when people come in expecting to have little success or modest success and suddenly sense that, somewhere in the middle, there is that chance of pulling off an unexpected bold step. As I said, I know that euphoria sometimes begins to overtake events. I know the sensation that grips people who have been frustrated and struggled through political life and through all the bureaucratic hurdles that are always put up, when they see, suddenly, a bold ray of sunshine; they see an end, an agreement, and they see it is within their grasp.

I only say to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), and I would say to the Prime Minister, that a quick agreement is often not the best agreement. The quick accord is not always the right accord. It may be this time, but I think when it happens so suddenly, in the euphoria of one evening at Meech Lake, hard on the heels of two long years of important maturing and discussion of these issues, we are obliged to step back and analyse, we are obliged to take advantage of the need to finalize the wording in the drafting: to step back.

I think in that circumstance it was obligatory to have a public forum for all of this. Quebec followed the appropriate course and had two weeks of public hearings which produced the most thoughtful and important analysis we have seen of what the Meech Lake accord means and what it does not mean.

Manitoba is undertaking that process. This Legislature voted to have that process. The Premier of Ontario has chosen not to have those public hearings but to rush from the Meech Lake accord right back to Ottawa on June 2 to finalize the wording and then to begin the quick road down to finalization.

What is there to be lost by having public hearings? What is the risk? The risk that Ontarians may better understand what the future holds in terms of national programs? The risk that we may better understand whether we will ever have Senate reform? The risk that some communities in Canada may understand better what the immigration provisions are?

Surely the larger risk is that we offer a blank cheque to other governments or to the courts of this land, all in good faith but not understanding just how big that blank cheque is. What could possibly be the downside risk of allowing the public, allowing Eugene Forsey, to come in and speak for a couple of hours?

As the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) himself pointed out this afternoon, the government consulted Eugene Forsey prior to entering into the accord

which gave the Liberals the right to govern, but when it came time to enter into a constitutional accord which, far more important than putting them into office, will change the shape of our national institutions, affect national programs, affect Senate reform, affect immigration in this country: for that, Eugene Forsey's advice was not sought; for that, his opportunity to speak to the public in Ontario was taken away, or at least not given. Why not? What conceivable reason is there?

As I pointed out earlier today, this Legislature is about to undertake hearings to allow the public to come in to speak to truck transport reform. Why not Senate reform? Why not reform of the Constitution of this country?

1540

One of the reasons we thought this public hearing was so vital, and remains so vital, was emphasized, I think, by the opening remarks of the Premier this afternoon. I want to say to the Premier I have looked forward to this debate, because I have pressed for it from the day he returned from Meech Lake. I had anticipated this would be his opportunity to outline for us in some detail his understanding of all the clauses—not his reading of the clauses, but his understanding of the clauses.

I had hoped that this afternoon the Premier would seize the opportunity to dispel the interpretation of Premier Bourassa in terms of some of those clauses. I would have hoped this afternoon that the Premier and his Attorney General (Mr. Scott) might take advantage of this opportunity to clarify the difference in interpretation between M. Rémillard, the Minister responsible for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Attorney General of Ontario on the opt-out provision.

I would have hoped in his comments this afternoon the Premier would have outlined his understanding of the immigration clause for all of us and all Ontarians to know, versus the interpretation Mr. Bourassa has put on it. We read in the Toronto Star today that Mr. Pawley dramatically disagrees with Mr. Bourassa in terms of the opt-out clause.

This afternoon the Premier had an opportunity to share information with us, to bring us up to date on the latest drafting options, to comment on the Quebec hearings, to outline his understanding and interpretation of the clauses in question. We are here today not to vote on the accord but for each of our parties to present a position on the accord, the public and our party here in Ontario not having been given even the Premier's

interpretation of the accord, not having been permitted to hear from all the constitutional experts and members of the public, as the people in Quebec have been allowed to do.

We in this party want to support this accord. We want to have Quebec in here. A party such as mine will not claim to have a greater desire to get Quebec into the Constitution than any other party, but neither will we suggest we have a lesser one. We were there in 1982. The William Davis and Roy McMurtry roles were key and fundamental to that 1982 agreement. We stand equal with all parties in desiring to have Quebec in this accord and in the Constitution and to sign the Constitution; but we are entitled to have some answers. We must know the price. Have we given away Senate reform? That is a very real question.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: No.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier says "No." I will get to that later on.

Have we given away a national day care program? Have we perhaps lost the opportunity to implement a national guaranteed annual income across the country?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: No.

Mr. Grossman: If the Premier had the answers to these questions, he chose to use about 18 minutes to share with this House his understanding of these very important issues which have been written about in the media for weeks, which have been spoken about by Eugene Forsey and others, which have been debated in the Quebec public hearings, which he will not allow us to have here. If he believes our concerns about losing these programs are not legitimate concerns, why did he not address them a moment ago? He had as much time as he needed to share that information with us.

Has freedom of movement for immigrants been restricted? Quebec clearly thinks so. Does the accord inadvertently undermine minority-language rights through the distinct society provision? These are important questions and I have not heard them addressed this afternoon. I have not heard them thoroughly addressed by the Premier or the Attorney General since the night at Meech Lake.

Have we changed this family into a league? Have we changed our nation into a hotel? Is the national interest served by empowering a province with the population of East York to veto further constitutional developments? Is the national interest served by restricting the spending power of the federal government? Is the national

interest served by restricting the mobility of new Canadians? Those are important questions.

I am concerned today, as I think many people are, that there is a separate negotiating process going on in Quebec with respect to how the final shape and form of this deal will appear. Let me be clear. I am not suggesting for a moment that the government of Canada is not dealing honourably or in complete good faith. Quite the contrary. In fact, it is precisely due to the forthright manner of the Prime Minister and Senator Murray and others that success has been achieved to date.

But within the dynamics of the politics of Quebec and the politics of its legislature, as I have come to understand them—and I dealt with separatist cabinet ministers and other members of the Quebec assembly for some time—there are inevitably pressures building which I believe Ontario's government must be prepared to resist.

I want to continue by dealing with the public hearings question. We are on a fast track here. It is a quick accord, achieving in a night what was stitched together by Trudeau and Chrétien and Davis and Romanow and McMurtry over two years.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: And Wells.

Mr. Grossman: And Mr. Wells.

Let me say that I am—

Hon. Mr. Peterson: You are wrong. Your facts are wrong.

Mr. Pope: And the Premier doesn't want to explain. No one else has the right to know anything.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier is once again saying our facts are wrong. The Premier will have every opportunity to correct my interpretation of what was happening in the cabinet in which I served for eight and a half years and the media's interpretation of who built that constitutional deal and how long it took. All I can say is it was an important deal that took a lot of time, a lot of analysis and a lot of public debate, exactly the public debate which the Premier will not allow in Ontario on the Meech Lake accord.

The Premier has had the opportunity to outline the process from here. We understand, having consulted with the federal government, that there will be three years allowed for ratification. The Premier indicates that is accurate. I regret that he has not shared that information with us.

If there are now three years to the point at which we must ratify, I want to say right here I think it is fundamentally important that the government today undertake that, having failed to allow Ontarians the opportunity for public

hearings prior to his signing of the Meech Lake accord some time in June, it will unfailingly undertake to allow public hearings before this Legislature is asked to ratify the Meech Lake accord some time later this year or next year. We have not yet got that minor undertaking; minor to the government, major to us.

Why do we need all this? Let me simply refer to the people who gathered yesterday to express concern with regard to understanding the answers to the questions I just posed. This group is comprised of the following people: Eugene Forsey, York University president Harry Arthurs, Manitoba Liberal Party leader Sharon Carstairs, publisher Adrienne Clarkson, author Hugh MacLennan, historian and NDP strategist Desmond Morton, francophone historian and economist Albert Breton, labour conciliator Carl Goldenberg, lawyer Eddie Greenspan and authors June Callwood, Doris Anderson and Farley Mowat.

This very distinguished group of Canadians is not opposed to the accord. This group of distinguished Canadians shares with our party the need to understand it before a blank cheque is signed. They are calling upon the Premier of this province and his colleagues to delay the final signing of the accord until it has been studied and debated in public.

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They go on to say, "Although it is a matter of national achievement that there has been a constitutional agreement under which Quebec can enter into the Canadian constitutional order, it is irresponsible and a disservice to Canadians to proceed with new constitutional provisions the terms of which have been largely unexplained and unexplored."

What is the risk, I ask the Premier, in public hearings?

I also want to draw the attention, particularly of the government House leader who spoke so fondly of Eugene Forsey and how much respect he had for him, to the letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail* from the same Eugene Forsey, printed this morning. I will read in part what Eugene Forsey said:

"My initial support for the Meech Lake accord was qualified. I said I was 'encouraged...' and 'hoped that when we got the final product I should feel the same way.' I said also that 'the definition of Quebec as a 'distinct society' remained a question mark' and that 'I'd want to look very carefully at whatever formula was finally produced on that subject.'"

Former Senator Forsey goes on to say:

"I have since looked very carefully at what the accord says on a variety of subjects, and have very serious misgivings not only on the distinct society but on the federal spending power, immigration and the Supreme Court of Canada. On all these, there are obscurities and ambiguities, some of them very dangerous, which need to be cleared up."

It is signed by Eugene Forsey.

In the face of the constitutional advice and the reservations given by Eugene Forsey, the very person who gave to the government the constitutional advice that allowed it to take office, the very person who has been acknowledged as Canada's expert in constitutional matters, when he indicates his reservations and his misgivings saying they need to be cleared up and some are dangerous, I ask the Premier, why have we not had public hearings? Why has this Legislature not been given the opportunity to cross-examine Senator Forsey so that we can understand his misgivings? Hopefully the Premier would take an opportunity to clear them up. He had an opportunity to do that; he has not done it.

I want to turn to some of the clauses, the federal spending power, the opt-out power. The Premier has referred to it and read it into the record. I will not repeat it. Suffice to say that the Leader of the Opposition in Quebec, the Honourable Pierre-Marc Johnson, has taken the view that the Meech Lake accord gives Quebec no significant new powers and costs the federal government no economic power. In a sense, I might say Pierre-Marc Johnson has offered some in this Legislature far more comfort by his words than I am sure he intended.

On the other hand, according to the Premier of Ontario, "The proposal will in some ways strengthen Ottawa's ability to set up new social programs, since the agreement formally recognizes the federal government's right to spend on programs in the provincial domain."

The Attorney General has on this occasion agreed with his leader. He is quoted as saying that the Meech Lake document establishes for the first time Ottawa's right to spend money in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. I pause to say that while the Attorney General denied in this House last week that he had said anything since the Meech Lake accord agreement, it turns out he had given those exact words to Le Devoir perhaps hoping we would not find those words.

Now let us turn to the words of Premier Bourassa. They are far less comforting. In fact, they are different. He said at the first day of public hearings in his province, "We are working

now on a legal text that would ensure a legal mechanism that would not give a constitutional groundwork to federal spending." He goes on to say: "It is obvious that this was not the goal of the agreement in principle. It was to limit the spending power of the federal government."

Here we have it: two of the alleged leading architects, the Premier of Quebec and the Premier of Ontario, with categorically different views on whether the federal spending powers have been increased or decreased.

I think we have to be frank about something, and that is about the fact that any government of Quebec under any stripe will be under immense pressure to move the goalposts considerably—that is the way it happens—so that Quebec will in fact achieve substantive gains in the powers that a distinct society, to use the words of the accord, should have, in its view.

That is the dynamic in any province. Anyone in this House who believes that Quebecers in good faith, in doing what the accord told them they ought to do—that is, guarantee their distinct society—will not try to move the goalposts and will not try to interpret these clauses in order to give themselves dramatically more power than the Premier of this province suggests is naïve, with respect, and does not understand the political dynamic that is always at play in Quebec and sometimes boils over.

With so many opposing interpretations on the record from people who are in the same room signing the same accord, it is clear that we need a broader and clearer definition of the federal spending clause. Under what terms are provinces going to be able to opt out? Are they going to get a lot of money or a little money? What kind of compensation is it? How is it paid? The whole argument over whether they are national objectives or national standards has become extremely vague. In point of fact, the wording is quite clear.

The interpretations are now running wild. We have seen Mr. Rémillard dramatically disagree with the Premier of Ontario in terms of what is a program compatible with national objectives. We are about to enter into an accord and this House is going to be asked to enter into an accord, which Quebec thinks gives it the power to take the money and have a broad definition of how it can otherwise spend it, and which the government of Ontario believes requires it to have a program very close to the national program set up in its place.

We risk seeding the clouds for dysfunction, serious dysfunction, in areas of social and

economic programming, which could be very serious indeed decades from now.

It is not too much to expect from the leaders of this country that they all agree completely and openly in terms of the compensation paid and the degree to which national programs have to be matched to national objectives and standards met by the provinces.

We need to know about the national day care program. It is currently being relied upon in Ontario, as expressed in the budget last week, as key to all of this, as key to improving child care in Ontario, at the very same time at which the Meech Lake accord would seem to threaten the possibility of mounting a national child care program. If I am wrong, the Premier has had several weeks to disabuse us of that, but I am not the only one who has those concerns.

I look across the country—I have been to every single province—and I see vast differences in standards and in programs; vast differences, which so far have not been diminished, in quality of education and health care, to name two, across the land. If we, in this accord, diminish the possibilities that the federal government may reinforce those institutions and others, reinforce the social equality in this country that is lacking, then we do them a disservice.

I want to turn now to immigration. On this side of the House we happen to believe that when people emigrate to Canada they emigrate to Canada. When people from Italy, Greece, Portugal, the Middle East, the Caribbean, the Far East or the United Kingdom come to this country they are choosing Canada, all of it. It is important that they not be forced to accept an ethnocentric approach, which in our view would diminish the Canadian ideal and dilute in this country the value of citizenship from coast to coast.

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Let me refer to the immigration clauses in the Meech Lake accord. The first clause provides that under the Constitution, "the government of Canada shall negotiate an immigration agreement appropriate to the needs and circumstances of a province that so requests...."

It is important for the people across this land, for the immigrant communities within blocks of this debate, in the shadow of this assembly, to know whether we are going to get 10 provinces each entering into an immigration agreement with the national government of this country.

We want to know whether it is appropriate—and it says here they may all be entrenched—that 10 provinces have an immigration agreement entrenched in the Constitution. Is that not going

to restrict freedom of movement of immigrants? The Premier shakes his head and says no. He had an opportunity to explain this half an hour ago. He chose not to.

Let me read the accord. In terms of outlining the provisions that might be put in such an immigration agreement, it says, "Guarantee that Quebec will receive a number of immigrants, including refugees, within the annual total established by the federal government for all of Canada proportionate to its share of the population of Canada, with the right to exceed that figure by five per cent for demographic reasons."

It is hard to reconcile a clause that says Quebec may now entrench in the Constitution an immigration agreement ensuring that it gets its proportion plus five per cent of the immigration coming to Canada. What does that say to the people who are looking to reunite their families from Portugal to Toronto? Is this somehow going to restrict the freedom of movement for new Canadians in this country? How else is the clause going to be enforced? We have read in the hearings that Quebec has spoken of the importance of the immigration clause. Does the immigration clause mean nothing more than that it shall have the right to require its proportion plus five per cent of immigrants to come to Quebec first and then they can leave the next morning?

The Premier says yes. I must say, one of the reasons we needed public hearings was perhaps so someone from the Quebec government could attend here and hear it has signed an agreement that forces a charade.

Quebec is boasting that the longest provision of all those in the accord is in fact the charade which says only that the province has the right to require that a Portuguese immigrant go from Madrid to Quebec City before he or she comes to Toronto with his or her family.

If that is the import of the immigration provisions in the Meech Lake accord, then I suggest the Quebec government is going to be held up to ridicule in its province. It cannot possibly be that is all Quebec thought it was getting. There has to be a dichotomy between the realities as the Premier sees them and the realities as Quebec sees them. Some government has entered into an agreement which either restricts the free flow of new Canadians throughout this country or is a charade. There is no middle ground between those.

It goes on to say that provinces, in signing and entrenching an immigration agreement in the Constitution, will "provide an undertaking" by

the federal government "to withdraw services ...for the reception and integration of all foreign nationals wishing to settle in Quebec." I wonder how the minister responsible for multiculturalism in Ontario feels about that.

Should the federal government have no role in the reception and integration of foreign nationals wishing to settle in Quebec? Is that really how you build a country, or is that how you construct a league? Is that how you select draft choices for a new baseball league, or is that how you build a country? A country is a country.

I am mystified and need to be reassured with regard to how immigrants are going to be brought to this country and what their freedom of movement throughout this country is going to be. I remind you, Mr. Speaker, this is only with regard to a Quebec agreement. The Meech Lake accord says each province can enter into an immigration agreement with the federal government.

Another question I have for the Premier, unanswered so far, is that if the Quebec government has negotiated its proportion plus five per cent, which province is going to go to the federal government and say, "We would like to enter into an immigration agreement with you, accepting our proportion minus five per cent"? The Quebec proportion, the five per cent built on the second largest population base in Canada, says in essence to Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, "When you enter into immigration agreements, you are going to get far less than your share minus five per cent."

There can be no other interpretation. They have agreed that they shall get their proportion plus five per cent. I have not done the calculations, because I have been hoping this is meaningless. The Quebec government tells me it is not meaningless. What does that mean for immigration into Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan? It seems to me to say they will be getting far less than their share.

Where is the five per cent going to come from? It is going to come from some province. Is this a healthy thing for Canada? Should immigrants not have some freedom to select where they are going to live in Canada once they are accepted by the national government of this country as having met the qualifications for immigration; or is it, as the Premier would have it, that "You can live in Regina if you wish, so long as you spend your first night in Quebec City"? I cannot believe the 11 first ministers in this country entered into that sort of agreement at Meech Lake.

I want to go on to the "distinct society" provisions. It goes on to say, "The Constitution of Canada shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with"—let me go on to paragraph 1(b)—"the recognition that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society." It goes on in paragraph 3 to say, "The role of the legislature and government of Quebec to preserve and promote the distinct identity of Quebec referred to in paragraph (1)(b) is affirmed."

That is very important, and I will bow to no one when it comes to understanding or respecting the distinct society that is Quebec; but are we today being asked to give a blank cheque to the interpretation of what Quebec needs to do to protect and promote the distinct identity of Quebec?

As one of those who was around for the signing of the Charter of Rights, I am delighted that there have been tests in the courts under the charter and that they have been successful in some cases. I have been delighted with the success the charter has had in defending minority language rights in Quebec. These rights, precisely the kinds of rights which the charter was created to sustain, have been sustained at the highest level by the judiciary in that province.

My question now to the Premier is, how will the courts interpret the new clause which allows Quebec "to preserve and promote the distinct identity of Quebec"? Could the clause be invoked, as suggested in last week's Financial Times, to justify Quebec's Bill 101? In other words, could the "distinct identity" clause in the Meech Lake accord undermine the protection the charter gave to minority rights in 1982? That is a fundamental question.

Let me read from the article. This is an article reflecting upon the events since the signing of the accord and the Quebec public hearings, the hearings we could not have in Ontario.

"The question is how the courts will read it. Quebec thinks the clause will introduce a new philosophy of federalism that gives it special powers. Quebec has already mused that it could use the new status to defend laws that might be seen as contrary to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provincial officials say the clause could be invoked to justify, for instance, a provincial law, Bill 101, allowing signs only in French. Had the distinct identity clause been in effect, Quebec may have been better able to resist legal challenges to this legislation."

Here we have Quebec officials, not having been asked to comment on this in Ontario, not having been given the opportunity to debate this

in public hearings in Ontario, actually boasting that the Meech Lake accord could be invoked by them to justify bringing back provincial bills and laws which have restricted minority language rights, those very things that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms says they cannot do. Now Quebec officials are hopeful that the Meech Lake accord will overrule the courts, undermine the charter and give them the right that was taken away by the charter to discriminate against minorities in Quebec.

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I pray I am wrong and I hope I am wrong, but as I follow these debates—and I have followed them carefully over the past couple of weeks—I have not heard a complete analysis offered by any of the parties which says to us there is little or no chance—there will never be no chance—but I expect to hear a categorical explanation of why the premiers concluded that there was almost no risk that minority language rights would be inhibited by virtue of the Meech Lake accord. Yet here it is, being reported from the mouths of Quebec officials.

Before any Canadians are asked to give a blank cheque, I think we must know that the “distinct society” clause will not be providing possible future separatist governments in Quebec with the kind of undue legal support for activities they may seek to pursue which they could not have pursued under the Charter of Rights. That is not asking too much in terms of explaining and giving those assurances.

A word about the Senate: Prior to the Meech Lake accord meetings, I raised in this House my very real concern that the Premier of Ontario would support a veto for the province of Quebec and the province of Ontario. I was there when the current formula was established, a formula which speaks far more to a sense of family and joint working together, the kind of need to find a working consensus which allows for progress, and not a situation, to use the Premier’s own words from earlier today, that it not be “frozen in time.” He was boasting, and I think quite properly, that this would ensure that the 1982 constitutional agreement would not be frozen in time. The Constitution should not be, but it is interesting to wonder whether the Senate provisions, the reform of the Senate, will not now be frozen in time.

I sought from the Premier before he went to Meech Lake an assurance that Ontario and Quebec would not each be seeking for itself a veto. Clearly—I should not say “clearly”—but I speculate that what happened was that it got

around the table and the other provinces raised severe objections to Quebec and Ontario each having a veto. Before many minutes had passed, it was agreed, “Can we have our veto if we give each one of you a veto?”

That was not the point of my question. The point of the question I put forward in this House was precisely the opposite, that no single province in this land, whether it is Prince Edward Island or Ontario, should be able to veto alone, standing on its own, constitutional revisions. That is what freezes a constitution in time. It is when one province alone can say no, can say, to quote the former Prime Minister, who must be worrying about this, “Zap, you are frozen,” that it is not going to move.

It seems to me that the premiers and the Prime Minister gathered and, instead of coming out and saying no to the Ontario veto alone and no to the unilateral Quebec veto, they said: “I’ll tell you what. On a couple of clauses in the constitution, we will give each one of you a veto.” That was precisely the wrong direction.

I want to say, of all the provisions, this is not one that I am terribly comfortable with. How are we going to get that unanimity and what price are we going to pay for it? I must say I am one who has very much preferred the approach that requires provincial co-operation and consultation, and still the collective power to proceed.

Is the unanimity clause fair to people in less populous provinces who would like to see a restructured Senate? Is it fair to say to the people the Premier spoke to in Alberta that the federal institutions they wish changed shall be protected in perpetuity by giving everyone the veto that Ontario and Quebec started out seeking for themselves?

As I conclude, I think there are some important principles here. To take a narrow time frame on it—when you have taken two or three years to repatriate, as Davis, Trudeau and Chrétien did, and when you want to make a significant change to that process—is a dangerous way to proceed. When you are choosing to go that fast-track route, then surely the need for public hearings and public dialogues is compressed and heightened.

For two years I participated in debates and discussions on the constitutional arrangements across this country. All that time there were editorials written and there were debates and forums. It was the *raison d’être* of the Prime Minister of the day and it was a matter of national interest even through the recession, surprisingly. Here we have chosen to fast-track it, to get

significant alterations in a night and a couple of weeks.

If it is a good deal, I applaud it and will be happy to support the fast track that made it possible. But in order to make that judgement, I and the members of my party, Canadians everywhere, need to have a full and complete analysis of the implications. We need to know that the terms are not "largely unexplained and unexplored," as the committee of prominent Ontarians has said.

When nation building we need to know that we are not building a nation when our most supreme and respected constitutional expert says there are obscurities and ambiguities, some of them very dangerous, which need to be cleaned up. What country, in the face of that, would proceed to a fast-track, no-hearings, vague constitutional arrangement?

We meet here to discuss and, more important, the Premier will meet again in a couple of weeks to discuss the reworking of a country. Does the codicil to this will undo what the carefully drawn will did? We do not know the answers. To walk in to sign it in the face of Eugene Forsey and others and not to have had the opportunity for a tradeoff of the opinions of esteemed historians and parliamentarians is dangerous.

I simply urge the Premier that blank cheques are always dangerous and we now have three provinces with differing interpretations: Howard Pawley this morning categorically disagreeing with Premier Bourassa, and the Premier of Ontario disagreeing with Premier Bourassa. We have leaders going to the table, each with a blank cheque, not knowing what is going to be filled in.

We believe that the spirit of Meech Lake is one of consultation. If it is a new era, a new spirit, a new beginning, then that spirit should be extended now into this House. It should be reflected by the attitude of this parliament. I urge the government today to show leadership in embarking on an equally open approach in a consultative, nonpartisan analysis in public hearings in this Legislature. We believe that for the spirit of Meech Lake to be meaningful there must be full public discussion of these issues with some clear answers. We must know what we are doing.

Let me be clear. Blank cheques on fundamental issues like these are not acceptable. It is not within the spirit of Meech Lake for this government to do anything but volunteer a full and open discussion of these issues before the final signature is affixed. I want to propose that the House leaders of this Legislature meet

immediately to discuss and agree upon a framework for public debate and analysis as part of the process prior to June 2, and certainly as part of the three-year ratification process which will follow any signing the Premier agrees to.

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I want to close by saying I have tried to pose questions today that are not unique to my party. They are the questions that have been posed by Eugene Forsey, by Ramsay Cook and by Frederick Vaughan.

Let me quote Frederick Vaughan, professor of political science at the University of Guelph:

"My real concern is that this weakens us institutionally more than we have ever been before. It doesn't provide us with an opportunity to act with a national will. This is a major constitutional time bomb. It could explode in our faces."

That is a political science professor at Guelph, well known across the country.

Ramsay Cook says, "The distinctive entity could allow Quebec to justify anything from a separate manpower training program to its own foreign service." Eugene Forsey—and on and on.

I pose questions today which I have not thought of, which my colleagues and I have worried over but which we have not devised; they are devised by some of the leading constitutional experts in the land. They come out of our participation, I will admit, in the 1982 discussions, but they are the simple, straightforward questions to which Ontarians have not got answers. More frightening, they are the questions to which Quebecers have got answers that are different from the vague answers we have got in Ontario. That is a dangerous way to rebuild a country.

We offer the Premier our co-operation, our goodwill and our earnest commitment to work with the House leaders to put together a schedule for public hearings. We want to send him back to Ottawa knowing that we needed public hearings and he did not give them to us; knowing that there is vagueness with regard to what he is agreeing to do and he has not straightened it out; knowing that we are concerned about the disagreement between provinces on what it is they agreed to; but knowing too that we seek earnestly to work with him to find a way to join in this accord.

We hope to rise in this House at a later time and join in ratification, but the Premier must respect the system. He must reach out to Ontarians and take us into his confidence. He must equip us to say to our children: "We did not restrict freedom of manpower. We did not restrict freedom of new

Canadians to travel across this country. We did not freeze Senate reform in time. We did not end the possibility of national programs in this country." He must equip us to say those things.

We ask only for the answers to the questions we have posed. When we get those answers, this party, with its tradition well established by John Robarts 20 years ago and reaffirmed by Davis, McMurtry and Wells five years ago, will be eager to step forward and join in a vote supporting a new arrangement which will allow Quebec to be part of our constitutional plans in this country. But we must be treated with the information and with the understanding to allow us to make an informed decision.

We await the answers. We await the public hearings. Ramsay Cook, Eugene Forsey, Doris Anderson, June Callwood and others seek the answers to those questions. Canada deserves no less from Ontario. This House deserves no less from the government. The people of Ontario deserve no less from this Legislature.

Mr. Rae: I must confess to a certain degree of unease at the extent of the piety that has been expressed in the chamber this afternoon. If I can be autobiographical for just a moment, whenever I hear the word "constitution," something in me goes off, my hands turn slightly cold and I reflect back on the fact that I would not think there are too many workers in York South who are losing a lot of sleep over the questions with respect to the Constitution. We have got to put this issue in some perspective and not attack it with the degree of piety and portentousness with which it has been associated.

The Premier referred to the process of national reconciliation and bonding. I somehow find that a practical agreement reached between 11 people over the space of 18 hours scarcely amounts to that. The leader of the Conservative Party had a number of questions to raise, which I think are quite legitimate, which we have not received answers to, which I want to talk about.

But, again, I must confess to a certain amount of irreverence about this question of the Constitution. We have spent an awful lot of time in a process of national hand-wringing. Much of it, in my view, has been very unproductive. In fact, we have had a preoccupation with legal forms at the expense of real policies. We have all seen in our own caucuses—and I can speak from personal experience, both federally and provincially—the most extraordinary expenditure of emotion at the expense of substance on the basis of what are essentially hypothetical questions.

Let me suggest that we are now engaged in a slightly even more bizarre and absurd process, in that we are being asked to approve in principle an agreement which is yet to be reached. I must confess I find that a rather difficult exercise, even though I did attend university for more years than I would care to admit on a public platform in York South. I find it rather strange that we would be spending time now debating, as I say, the principles of an agreement which has, by the admission of the Premier himself, not been arrived at.

The way in which this is described is to say, "All they are really arguing about now is the wording." That is what a Constitution is: words. If we cannot agree on the words, we cannot agree on the concepts. If we cannot agree on the concepts, we have not got an agreement.

So the first thing I would say to the Premier is that I am not sure we have an agreement yet. We are all entitled to that degree of scepticism. I find it offensive that we would be asked to approve in principle an agreement which is not yet there. I can tell him, on behalf of our party, we have no intention of voting in favour of an agreement we have yet to see. It would be a little bizarre if we were expected to do so.

If the Premier wants to be able to go to the second phase of the meeting, which will take place next week—though, listening to Mr. Bourassa, I was not entirely sure precisely which day he intended to show up; but my understanding is that it is still going to take place on June 2—if the Premier is asking to come out of this process with some kind of emphatic endorsement of the bonding he told us went on at the last meeting, I think he is going to be disappointed.

The language about two clauses has apparently not been agreed on: the question of a distinct society and the wording on the federal spending power. In these circumstances, it is literally impossible for the House to give its opinion. It is impossible for the House to give its approval or disapproval to the motion.

I referred briefly to my experience in the constitutional process. It has always been as a member of a Legislative Assembly, obviously not as one of the select 11 who meet behind closed doors and apparently decide on these things. I must confess to a degree of frustration with the constitutional process, which I do want to talk about before I get into the substance of the issues in front of us.

Canada has had a Constitution since 1867, which it has always had enormous difficulty in changing. Our founding fathers took a long time

to arrive at the agreement known as the British North America Act of 1867. We all studied the debates in 1864 and 1865, the discussions in Upper Canada throughout the 1850s, the bringing together of a consensus that was finally arrived at in 1867. It is fair to say there was very significant difference among those individuals as to what exactly they had agreed upon. It is fair to say that the Privy Council in London until 1950 or later, and after that the Supreme Court of Canada, spent a considerable amount of time telling Canadians what it is that the Constitution means.

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There is no getting around that role for a court. It is fair to say the British court over a period of many years interpreted the Constitution in a very decentralized manner. They gave a great deal of power to the provinces and recognized the property and civil rights sections of section 91 as having considerable tenacity and considerable holding power against the strength of the work of the federal government. All that was shot to hell by the Second World War when, by virtue of the crisis which emerged in Canadian society as it did in every western society, it became clear that a totally decentralized approach to these questions would not work.

As a result, many of our institutions were profoundly centralized and our federal-provincial relationships have reflected to some extent that centralization, and then the subsequent decentralization which has again emerged as a theme, I think it is fair to say, in the 1960s and 1970s and now in the 1980s.

It is one of the key problems in our constitutional life that we have had tremendous difficulty in reforming the Constitution. I do not know whether that is a good thing or a bad thing. I personally do not think it is such a terrible thing if constitutions are relatively hard to change. There are a lot of countries that have a lot of constitutions and I perhaps can tell the Legislature what Father Bob Ogle said to us in the middle of what was, for a caucus, a series of exchanges which did not have too many humorous points.

Many Canadians are coming to know Father Ogle because of this marvellous book he has written about his life. He is suffering from cancer and has written his autobiography. He is travelling across the country talking about his life. Bob Ogle is quite a wonderful man with a unique sense of humour and understands a great deal about life and politics that I know is contained in his new book. Bob Ogle said, "The

reason I cannot get too upset about all this is that I spent a lot of my time working in countries where you wake up in the morning and you have one constitution, you go to bed at night and you have another constitution, and you wake up the next morning and you have a third constitution." He said, "I am not so sure it is so terrible that we have a Constitution that is tough to change."

The fact of the matter is we do have a Constitution that has proven very resistant to change. We have some aspects of our Constitution that were obviously most difficult to face up to. First, up until very recently, up until 1982, we did not have the ability in Canada to amend our own Constitution. Whenever an amendment took place, it was almost like a kind of immaculate conception. One did not quite know how it got there. It would be passed miraculously by the House of Commons in England and it would be incorporated into the Canadian Constitution.

For example, we made an amendment with respect to unemployment insurance some 35 years ago, which was then contained, but we did not have the ability to patriate. We did not have our own Constitution. It was a product of the British Parliament. We needed to patriate it and we needed to find a way to establish an amending formula. With the election of Mr. Trudeau as the Prime Minister, it became crucial to respond to his particular agenda with respect to a Charter of Rights, language rights and other questions which preoccupied the nation and preoccupied Premiers' conferences for a very long time.

The process that has been worked out is a very poor process. I think we as a House and the Premier ought to reflect on this for a moment. The notion that there is a process of national reconciliation and bonding when 11 people get together in a room and come up with an agreement which none of the rest of Canadians have ever even seen, or seen as what might emerge from that agreement, is quite bizarre. It is not a process of national reconciliation and bonding; it is a process of trading and a process of negotiation between 11 people who have no profound mandate to negotiate anything.

If I may refer back to the earlier period, one of the enormous frustrations I felt as a member of parliament at that time was that, first of all, we were presented with a unilateral decision by the Trudeau cabinet with respect to what should happen. We then had to respond to that and try to improve it, which we did for several months. The federal government then came in with another proposal, which was a refinement of that proposal, all the time bargaining with the

provinces as to what would take place. After a series of crises which everybody is aware of, that was then referred to the Supreme Court, which said it was legal but it was not necessarily 100 per cent politically correct, so there were some constitutional questions raised about it. There was then another Premiers' conference.

If I may say so, and I do not mean to single out the piety or the reverence of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) or indeed that of the Premier, but to describe the kitchen-table conversations between Roy Romanow and Jean Chrétien and Roy McMurtry as somehow equivalent to the federalist papers and the creation of the federal Constitution of the United States between 1776 and 1787 is absurd.

Something was bargained which was ultimately accepted because it was better than anything else that could be arrived at. I do not think it is the greatest product in the world. There are a lot of problems with it, and I think the degree of flexibility that is reflected in it is important, but let us not elevate it to the status of the highest kinds of expressions of nationhood. We have not yet reached that. We have not yet reached that, in my view, because the process which we have established is so inadequate.

The reason the process is inadequate is because we have a federal state in which there are a number of parties that have powers they will not give up. So a number of distinguished academics and other people, both inside and outside the political process, ask: "Why don't we have a constitutional convention? Why don't we get back to having the best minds in the country," whoever they might be, Lord only knows, "get together and work out what would be the best possible Constitution?"

That is not on. That is not in the cards. That is not part of the picture, for the simple reason, of course, and quite naturally and quite understandably, that we have not simply a Constitution as an abstract document, but that we have governments with powers and governments do not like to give up powers. Governments do not like to bargain away powers. They do not like to give anything up, so the people who basically determine what the Constitution will look like are not the people, they are governments that are bargaining with one another with respect to their powers.

That is what we are dealing with. We are dealing with a process which is, I would suggest, very imperfect, very irreverent, very practical, and which one hopes may in its own way express in some senses the realities of Canada, but to

describe it in the language which has been attributed to it strikes me as quite bizarre. What we are looking at is a process which is there but which has its frustrations; and I must say, as a member of this Legislature, I feel more than a little sense of being asked to do something that is totally unrealistic.

We are being asked to debate now an agreement which has not yet been reached and has not yet been signed. Similarly, the Premiers are being asked to sign a document whose consequences--and I will get into this in a moment--I would respectfully suggest they do not comprehend. If somebody tells me they do actually understand all the implications of what they are signing, I will go through that and I will have some questions to raise about how that could be possible.

We have a process that involves governments and to some extent the House of Commons, although not very much because basically it involves governments. It involves Premiers; it does not involve people. Those questions which affect the powers of government versus people always are settled against the people.

If I can give the one, most real example, what has been the agreement with respect to the native people? Nothing. Who was speaking for the native people? No one. What is their position at the table? Nowhere.

Don Getty's triple-E Senate idea--I mean, talk about a bird that won't fly--that is going to be the top priority for the next two or three years. Why? Because that was the price to get Premier Getty to go along with an agreement which we know, because of all the things he was saying, he would not agree to.

If you don't got leverage, you don't get in the door. So let us not talk about national reconciliation and bonding. Let us talk about basically what went on, what is there and what the reality of it is and the inadequacies of it, so that we can in some way try to address them, in how we approach it in the future.

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I talked about the constitutional process between 1980 and 1982. I do not think it was a great process. It was certainly divisive for the country. Nevertheless, it did produce patriation with a charter. I have some questions about the way in which the charter is being interpreted and the impact it is having on our society. I will be glad to discuss those on another occasion but I do not think I need to go into them here.

We have a "notwithstanding" clause that--I confess to having changed my mind--I had some

doubts about when it was arrived at, but I see with interest that the only person now who seems to think we should get rid of the “notwithstanding” clause is John Turner, for reasons I cannot understand. There are a lot of things about John Turner that I cannot understand and that is one of them. I cannot understand that one. Why would he want to get rid of that degree of flexibility in a charter that is increasingly becoming inflexible and giving judges extraordinary legislative power vis-à-vis the abilities of legislators to do their job on behalf of the people of their jurisdictions?

As we all know, the result of the trade—not the bonding but the trade—that took place the night they arrived at the way in which they would get most of the Premiers on board was that Quebec was left out of that part of the agreement. When I say “left out,” let us not pretend that Quebec suddenly stopped being a part of Canada or that it did not continue to have a real existence in terms of its laws and the fact it elected members of the Canadian House of Commons and the people were there and participating, but Quebec was not a signatory to that act of patriation and to the Canada act of 1982 as it became. I and I think a number of people felt there was a sense that the process had not come to fruition as long as that was the case.

I might also say that my own agenda—we all have our personal views of the Constitution; there are as many views on it as there are people—was that it was not simply that Quebec was outside but it was also that we did not have a preamble that reflected the multicultural nature of the country, and most important—I want to come back to this point again—it did not touch on the question of the rights and position of our first citizens, the people who were here before the European settlement took place. If we ask, “What is the great challenge to our country in the next time?” I believe very strongly it is somehow to reconcile the culture of the majority with the culture of the minority; by that I mean our aboriginal people.

We have completely failed as an industrial society to come to terms with the meaning of the historic meeting of cultures that took place some 300 or 400 years ago and that has consistently taken place to the disadvantage of our native people. If we do not come to terms with that as a society, what will happen? It is very hard to say because, as a minority, people do not have a lot of leverage and they do not have a lot of power. But we will be spiritually the poorer, as a culture and as an industrial society, for having exploited people but not allowed them to feel their home

was still theirs and this was the country, the land that was still theirs, in which they could simply be themselves.

There is no mention of that in our Constitution. I find that offensive as a Canadian. I do not feel adequately represented when that is left out of our Constitution. I think there are a lot of other people who feel the same way. More important than being left out of the Constitution is that we still have the very practical problems we are all aware of that we have not yet even begun to address.

To get Quebec into this Canada act and into this process there had to be an agreement that was acceptable to the government of Quebec. That was obviously difficult to do as long as the Parti Québécois was the government of Quebec because, to put it in the nicest way I can, of the extraordinary ambivalence of the Parti Québécois with respect to the Canadian nation, the Canadian Constitution and the Canadian federation. I put it no more strongly than that.

So, with the election of Mr. Bourassa, we went back to the Mr. Bourassa who, after all, signed the Victoria agreement in 1971. We thought we had an agreement then and he changed his mind. This time he says he is not going to change his mind. I do not mean any disrespect to Mr. Bourassa. Any professional in this business looks at his career and says, “Holy smokes, how did he do it?”

Interjection.

Mr. Rae: Next to Nixon—maybe the member would compare them slightly, in his own way—but not even that.

Mr. McClellan: It is his hairdresser.

Mr. Rae: It is his hairdresser.

Mr. Foulds: “Holy smokes” is a particularly appropriate phrase.

Mr. Rae: That is right.

The fact is that with Mr. Bourassa there, the feeling was that we had a chance to do it. To be charitable to Mr. Mulroney, who has had his own difficulties with his shoes and all the rest of it—it occurred to me, Mr. Speaker, that I ought to share this with you. Brian Mulroney will be the first Prime Minister in Canadian history to have more loafers in his closet than in his cabinet.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That is John Turner’s joke, but I will let you pick it up.

Mr. Rae: No, it is not.

To return to what is at stake here, I think Mr. Mulroney is sincere on this question. I think there was a sincere feeling, and I would say the same about the Premier, I think there was a sincere

feeling that if a formula could be found that would allow Quebec to be a full signatory of the Constitution and to be involved in this continuing Canadian road show of constitutional reform, which has now been built into the Constitution, God help us, that would be a good thing for Canada. I fully endorse that and I think our party fully endorses that idea. We are fully in favour of the efforts that have been made to bring that about.

I have some questions about the agreement that was arrived at and I have not heard any answers to them from the Premier. I do not want to be too critical, but I must confess I was expecting something a little meatier when I came in here today in terms of answers to the questions that have already been raised by both the Leader of the Opposition and myself with respect to these changes in the Constitution.

We have not heard very much from the Premier about them. I think he is expecting, as he said publicly—and we can rely on only what he said publicly—that there will be an agreement on June 2 and that once that agreement has been reached, then there will be time to sell it across the country in various ways and to explain to people what it might or might not mean.

I have some questions. I am going to go through the document which has been signed. I have done a little bit of reading and I have gone back to my constitutional law texts. I see some lawyers smiling. We all remember those exams with such joy. I have even resurrected some of my old files and notes from the earlier constitutional debate which I had put in a filing cabinet, and I have some questions for the Premier. It is not a hat I particularly enjoy wearing, because I must confess I find the sense of dealing with air hard. Even for a New Democrat, that is hard sometimes. I would like to have a deeper sense of what is involved.

Let me say that I did receive one brief briefing from the Attorney General the Friday after the Thursday meeting. I was travelling in my car on Thursday night. I got a call in the car saying: "It is the Queen's Park operator. The Attorney General wants to talk to you." Then a bright young executive assistant said, "The Attorney General wants to talk to you tomorrow morning to give you a briefing on the agreement which has just been arrived at." I thought, "This is great."

He brought in the agreement. He had the communiqué and we sat down and discussed it. The Attorney General was a teacher of mine. He taught me a course in labour law—which I quickly forgot—when I was in law school. We go back a

long way. We sat down and we went over some of the basic things you do when you go over an agreement. We went over each section, and I kept on asking him, "What does this mean?" He said, "I do not know." I must confess I was rather curious as to what the process was by which this agreement was arrived at.

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Having shared that with members, let me just go over it. Let us read through it. I hope not to take too long, but I did want to take the time, because this may be the only opportunity I get to raise these questions. I think they need to be raised.

Under "Quebec's Distinct Society," paragraph 1 begins: "The Constitution of Canada shall be interpreted"—first of all, I do not know where this goes in the document. We have a Constitution which has a charter at the beginning and then the rest of the British North America Act follows. I do not know whether this section on the distinct society goes at the beginning or in the middle; I do not know whether it goes before the charter or after the charter; in fact, I do not know what its relationship to the charter is. Nobody has told me. The Attorney General was not able to say and the Premier has not told us today.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: You never asked.

Mr. Rae: If the Premier says, "Ask," fine, I am asking. That is why I am here to speak to him. I did not get an answer when he rose to speak. The question then becomes:

"(1) The Constitution of Canada shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with:

"(a) the recognition that the existence of French-speaking Canada, centred in but not limited to Quebec, and English-speaking Canada, concentrated outside Quebec but also present in Quebec, constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Canada; and

"(b) the recognition that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society.

"(2) Parliament and the provincial legislatures, in the exercise of their respective powers, are committed to preserving the fundamental characteristic of Canada referred to in paragraph (1)(a).

"(3) The role of the legislature and government of Quebec to preserve and promote the distinct identity of Quebec referred to in paragraph (1)(b) is affirmed."

I think, in its own way, all of that is true. It is very hard for anybody to take exception to that as a partial description of how we understand Canada, yes; and as an acceptance of the fact that Quebec is a distinct society within Canada, as a

sociological fact and as a fact of life about the history of our country and the reality of Quebec society, of course.

Les chances que le Québec soit une société distincte, bien sûr. Il n'y a personne à mon avis qui pourrait avoir une objection aux principes très simples et très directs que le Québec représente une société et que la société québécoise est une société unique au Canada.

C'est une expression à la réalité canadienne que j'accepte; que nous acceptons tous dans le Parti. Même dans la résolution que nous avons passée à notre convention en 1961, nous avons reconnu la spécificité du Québec, la réalité distincte du Québec. Nous l'avons mentionné dans les années 60 et 70, et nous l'avons encore mentionné dans notre convention à Montréal, au Québec, il y a quelques semaines.

Naturellement, nous reconnaissons tous que le Québec est une société distincte, mais je dois dire au même temps que mentionner quelque chose dans un document constitutionnel n'aide pas nécessairement si on ne dit pas exactement ce que ça veut dire. Quels sont les conséquences spécifiques de cette reconnaissance?

What are the specific consequences of this, with respect to the charter? Just so my remarks are not misunderstood, either in English or in French, let me say that I do not believe the Premiers could agree on what relationship should exist between this and the charter. I would suspect that if the Premiers were to sit down with each other and say, "What should the relationship between this and the charter be?" there would be no agreement. Instead of saying, "We cannot agree, and since we cannot agree on what it means, we are not going to put it in," the decision is made that, "We will put it in and we will let the judges decide."

There is nothing shameful in admitting that, but let us admit that is what is being done. Let us admit that in this particular instance that is precisely what is being done. There is a profound ambiguity here, which one can only assume is intentional on the part of the drafters.

Now, we all deal in words. All of us are politicians. We have all made agreements. I am thinking of some—obviously, in my mind I think of one or two all the time. But the fact of the matter is, when we want to be ambiguous, we usually know among ourselves that is what we are being, and if we are being ambiguous, and I am looking at a master, let us at least have the courage, a certain kind of courage—not big-C big courage, but little, tiny courage—to admit that is what is being done here.

I think we owe it to ourselves to say that. The people of Quebec have been through and are going through a continuing debate on the question of language. The introduction of the charter and its interpretation has had an impact on Quebec society which has caused enormous tension.

We in our own party have discussed this and have tried to find ways of resolving and reconciling. I think one should at least admit that is what is being done here. I would like to see somebody come out of this process and say, "Look, there's a problem, and our way of trying to solve this problem is to say we want the courts to try to work out this question of balance."

I would personally feel happier. Mr. Broadbent has said he thinks that if we can add some extra wording which makes clear what we mean by the distinct identity of Quebec with respect to a French-speaking majority and an English-speaking minority and if that particular definition of Quebec can be acceptable and accepted within the document, it might make the act of interpretation a little easier.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: What does Jean-Paul say?

Mr. Rae: The House leader says, "What does Jean-Paul say?" referring to Mr. Harney. All I want to say is, I do not find it odd, having been through what I went through as a lowly private member in 1980, 1981 and 1982 and having seen my party and every other party going in every which direction in terms of how people felt on a number of these questions. I do not find it strange, and I might say I do not find it the least bit threatening.

In his wisdom, the House leader might want to feel the same way when he considers the number of members of the Chrétien team, of which he was such a superb team player, now playing on very different ends of the spectrum when it comes to the question of the Constitution. I would have thought that thought might have crossed his mind. Is the Treasurer telling us that Carl Goldenberg has not talked to him at all and expressed some views as to how he feels? Is he saying that all those people who are Liberals who are slightly unhappy have not picked up the phone and said—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have defended inconsistency longer than you have been alive.

Mr. Rae: I want to make sure the record gets that. The Treasurer said he was defending inconsistency long before I was alive. I am not—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We are not glassy-eyed, lockstep socialists.

Mr. Rae: All I am saying is that we should not be surprised or intimidated or worried by the fact we are having something called a debate about a constitution and that people feel differently about it. The notion that you can have unanimity because 11 people got together in a locker room on Meech Lake and decided what was best for the country and that there is now going to be some debate about it—there is no shame in that. There is no disgrace in that. I think it is a sign of national health, rather than anything else.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I couldn't have said it better myself.

Mr. Rae: Thank you very much.

With respect to immigration, which is the second part of the agreement, what I want to be so bold as to suggest is that again we have to see the language of what is being agreed upon, because this is a very long clause. I will not read it out, it is a full page. It would be a bizarre exercise in constitution-making if administrative agreements between governments were to be enshrined in a constitution as a basic constitutional principle.

Let me just ask this: Is it seriously suggested—and I do not know, because I have not seen the agreement, and I am not being negative or cute about it, I very much think an agreement that includes Quebec and gets Quebec into the Constitution is in the national interest. It is in that spirit that these remarks are intended. But if, for example, we are really suggesting that the Constitution itself should somehow crystallize for all time various administrative selection procedures which are worked out between governments as to who comes into Canada, where they first go, what happens, and all the rest of that, that is an absurdity. That is already a problem with the existing Constitution. Always, one of the problems in the act of making a constitution is that those who are making the constitution attempt to entrench or crystallize for all time arrangements or ideas that really have validity not for all time but that are very temporal and very limited.

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I would suggest that it is important and it is okay, and I have no problem with the idea that we should give some control to the government of Quebec. Because of the question of language and the question of the integration and the integrity of Quebec's society, one of the aspects of that distinctness is that Quebec should have some control over the question of immigration. That principle is fine, but the notion that in the wording of our Constitution we would incorpo-

rate a particular administrative agreement between two governments and say, "This is the Constitution of Canada which is emboldened for all time," I think is a bit absurd. All I can say is, I have not seen the agreement so I cannot comment on it any further than that.

I have no problem with the section on the Supreme Court. If Eugene Forsey finds an ambiguity, who am I to say he is wrong? We have Old Footnotes Forsey, as we used to call him in law school, the expert on such detail and such a distinguished historian and indeed friend of mine as of many New Democrats and democratic socialists across the country. If there are ambiguities there, and they may be there, I do not know what they might be. But the principle that the Supreme Court's existence should be entrenched in our Constitution and that there are three judges on it who are qualified at the civil bar strikes me as a good idea and something that makes perfect sense.

The idea that there should be a consultative process to appointments to the Supreme Court strikes me as a good idea as well, and we look forward to hearing from the Attorney General as to how he intends those judicial appointments to be made; not that anybody here is looking for a job at this point, but I just thought I might state that.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: But you may be soon.

Mr. Rae: There is only one lawyer here anyway; that is me, and I do not want to go.

"Spending power: Stipulate that Canada must provide reasonable compensation to any province that does not participate in a future national shared-cost program in an area of exclusive provincial jurisdiction if that province undertakes its own initiative or programs compatible with national objectives."

This is the one that has caused so much of the controversy and indeed so much uncertainty. I want to talk a bit about the spending power, because I think there has been quite a lot of misunderstanding about what it is all about.

With due respect, I say to the Leader of the Opposition there are a great many experts who have said a number of things about the spending power recently that I think are quite strange, with great respect to their expertise. For example, the argument that by virtue of this clause alone the federal government is somehow totally denuding itself of its ability to respond to our national problems is just factually and profoundly incorrect and a complete misrepresentation of the nature of our political life and the nature of our constitutional life. I want to talk about that

because I feel quite strongly about it, and I also feel it is important that the wording should make sense. I cannot comment on the wording because I have not seen it, but I do want to comment on the so-called debate about the spending power.

The Constitution that has been given to us, not the one entirely that we made but the one that has been interpreted for us by the courts and that has been drafted by our forefathers, is a Constitution that prior to the passage of the Charter was really about one thing, and that was about whether something was in an area of provincial or federal jurisdiction. There are many old jokes over that subject, which I will not tell. I will if I really need to, but I do not think I need to. I have told enough already.

Mr. Davis: Tell, tell, tell.

Mr. Rae: No, I will not. It is fair to say that the question of whether something is a federal or provincial jurisdiction is the stuff of which Canadian constitutional law is basically made. That is what our constitutional law has been all about. The powers enumerated in sections 91 and 92 have been much litigated and much discussed. There has been much controversy and they are the subject of great national preoccupation.

Let me also point out to those people who regard this clause as the beginning of the end of Canada, as it has been described by some rather exaggerated critics, that the amended Constitution passed in 1982 contains some very specific references to the principle of equalization. It talks very directly about the role of the federal government with respect to equalization.

The question of equalization and the equalization of opportunity and services across the country is something that is entrenched in the Constitution and is an integral part of our national life. Whether it is being met adequately is not a question for the Constitution. It is a matter of politics and political persuasion, not a matter that is going to be settled by constitutions.

While I am making that point, I might say that sometimes we try to put far too much in constitutions. We expect far too much of them and expect they will somehow reflect all the laws, all the aspirations and all that there is to be done. I think that is also a mistake. Sometimes we should spend far more time in this country debating substance in terms of services—I am going to close on that theme—and much less time talking about the abstractions and the legal arrangements.

Perhaps a sociologist will have something to say about the domination of lawyers in politics and how that explains the extraordinary amount

of time we spend discussing the form in which things are done rather than the things themselves, which I think is a mistake.

Before we understand the spending power, we have to understand the nature of the relationship between federal and provincial governments. We have to understand that the reality of the Constitution was changed permanently by the Depression and the Second World War, by the fact that many provinces were basically flat broke as a result of the Depression in the 1930s and by the fact that the federal government, even though it did not have powers prior to the Second World War, assumed many of those economic powers during the war. There was for a long time such an exclusive occupation of the taxation field and of so much of the spending field by the federal government that when the war was over, it became very difficult for the provinces to reassert themselves and reinsert themselves as partners in Confederation. That is what much of the negotiation during the 1950s, early 1960s and through the 1960s was all about.

The federal government has powers with respect to banking and currency, with respect to trade and commerce and with respect to the economy generally that are very extensive, that are not affected in any way by this agreement and that are not touched by this agreement. I think it would be a mistake for people to assert that somehow something is being dramatically taken away from the federal government that is really there. I want to talk about that.

What is the spending power? The spending power is different from the legislative power of governments. Perhaps I can illustrate it like this: Sections 91 and 92 give very specific powers to each level of government, but they do so with respect to legislation, so the provinces have exclusive jurisdiction with respect to legislating in the area of education. But we have governments that also have the capacity, as sovereign governments, to lend and to spend money.

Perhaps I can give the members an example. Ontario spends money on foreign aid; we do not have any jurisdiction in the field of foreign affairs and we do not have jurisdiction in the field of external trade, but nevertheless we spend, quite appropriately in my view. The most dramatic use of the federal spending power, as everybody in this House knows, has been the decision by various federal governments, in response to pressures and feelings from across the country and indeed from many provincial governments, that it would be appropriate and right for them, because of their overall national federal responsi-

bilities, to simply spend money and, by spending money, to thereby affect policy.

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Theoretically, that is what the spending power is all about. How has it been used? It has been used for hospital insurance; it has been used for the Canada Pension Plan; it has been used for medicare; it has been used for established programs with respect to higher education. That is principally how the spending power has been used.

It has also been used by the federal government to buy companies, to be involved in various aspects of trade and commerce within a province, to run businesses. Just as Ontario is involved in certain businesses, so too is the federal government. But that is the principal use and that is the principal area of controversy.

The federal government uses this spending power in response to political pressure. It is important to notice and to recognize that since the introduction of medicare, the federal government has not used the spending power in a dramatic or substantial way to get a new national program off the ground.

Prime Minister Trudeau had, I gather, some elliptical comments to make with respect to the Constitution which were quoted in the *Toronto Star*, which—well, I will let it go. Anyway, when Mr. Trudeau came to town, he made a very elliptical comment about what might or might not be in the agreement.

It is interesting that when Mr. Trudeau was the Prime Minister—I am relying on Peter Hogg's book on constitutional law, which is a very fine book, for this information. Mr. Hogg, who is an Australian originally, is one of the finest constitutional lawyers working today in Canada, teaching at Osgoode Hall law school. I am quoting from Peter Hogg, page 121, on the federal-provincial financial arrangements, the section entitled "Conditional Federal Grants." Mr. Hogg says: "The federal government has in recent years shown sensitivity to the criticism that federal conditional grants amount, in substance, to federal dictation of provincial spending priorities."

I might just say, by way of parenthesis, we will all recall that John Robarts referred to medicare as a machiavellian scheme. He referred to medicare as a machiavellian scheme almost the way the Premier now feels about car insurance. It is similar, because he saw it as a scheme being foisted on the province by means of this use of the federal spending power.

To go back to Peter Hogg: "In a 1969"—remember, a year after Trudeaumania took hold of the country—"federal working paper, it was proposed, not as definite federal policy but as a suggestion for discussion, that for the future shared-cost programs should be subject to two requirements.

"First, a shared-cost program within provincial legislative jurisdiction should be established only after a broad national consensus in favour of the program has been demonstrated to exist. This would be ascertained by prior submission of a federal proposal to provincial Legislatures.

"Second,"—and I am quoting now from the document which is the Trudeau document—"The decision of a provincial Legislature to exercise its constitutional right not to participate in any program, even given a national consensus, should not result in a fiscal penalty being imposed on the people of the province."

These two points may probably be regarded as current federal policies. Certainly, since 1969 there have been no new programs which have violated these precepts.

That is a very important assertion. Without reverting to the piety and portentousness of which I was critical at the beginning of my remarks, let us talk turkey here. Let us talk reality. No federal government today, or in the foreseeable future in a modern Canada, is going to be able to impose a shared-cost program on provinces across the country without the participation and approval of those provinces. That is not because of this wording; that is not because of this constitutional wording. It is not because of anything that any one of us is saying. It is because that is the reality of Canada today. I think it is worth our simply reflecting on that fact. What is more, the use of the federal spending power has always reflected that.

Let us look at the Canada assistance plan. The Canada assistance plan is negotiated with every province. It is not the same across the country. There is a federal plan that sets out certain parameters and requirements, but it is not the same in Prince Edward Island as it is in Ontario. The agreement that is negotiated with each province is different.

The leader of the Conservative Party said he wanted to see that education would be equal across the country. I wish him a lot of luck, in terms of the reality of modern Canada, in going into Quebec and having a federal government say to the people of Quebec: "We want to help you with your education. In fact, we want to bring you up to the national standard and this is how

you are going to do it." It is not going to happen. Cela ne va pas arriver.

Le gouvernement fédéral n'a pas le pouvoir, n'a pas la capacité, d'entrer dans une province et lui dicter comment elle va arranger les affaires dans sa propre juridiction. Cela ne va pas se passer. Le Parti conservateur le sait; dans son coeur, il le sait très bien. Le Parti libéral le sait, et nous le savons aussi.

Je dois dire que j'ai entendu beaucoup de paroles, même par M. Trudeau, disant, "Eh bien, peut-être que le pouvoir est changé dans cette situation." Il faut reconnaître, quand M. Trudeau était le Premier ministre, il a reconnu exactement ce problème. Il l'a reconnu dans le document de 1969, et c'est devenu la politique fédérale.

What is being suggested, if I understand what is being suggested, strikes me as sound. It strikes me as sound because what we are really saying is that when it comes to the federal government in the future, in an area of exclusive provincial jurisdiction, engaging in a national program, negotiated presumably with all the provinces, when that happens, if a province says it will not participate, that province has a right to fiscal compensation, but this even goes stronger. It says you will only get the compensation provided you are undertaking a program that is compatible with national objectives.

The question is, what does "national objectives" mean?

La question est exactement, ce que veut dire le document? Cela est le désaccord ou le désagrément entre M. Rémillard et le Procureur général (M. Scott) et entre le Premier de l'Ontario, comme je l'ai entendu hier, et les autres qui ont dit que si la province veut dépenser l'argent sur n'importe quoi, cela veut dire que nous allons toujours recevoir l'argent du gouvernement fédéral. A nous, cela n'est pas acceptable. That is not acceptable to us.

As I have heard Mr. Pawley, that is not acceptable to him. We in this room all know that there must have been a considerable amount of time spent on discussing whether the word should be "criteria" or whether the word should be "standards" or whether it should be "objectives." How is it that these little words like "initiatives" or "programs," all these words, have meanings? Words are all lawyers deal with. That is all the Constitution is. It is just words, and each word has a connotation.

I want the Premier to know that as far as I am concerned and as far as my party is concerned, we want him to be perfectly clear when going into these discussions on June 2 as to what we

think that means. I do not know whether a judge two years from now is going to agree with me or not; probably not with my luck. I do not know—I have no way of knowing—I am just saying, what do I think it means? I think, when you talk about national objectives, the national objectives refer to the programs or initiatives that are being undertaken by the federal government according to a national federal-provincial program with respect to a given area.

To be blunt about it, to use the colloquial expression, you cannot get money for day care and spend it on roads. You will only get money equivalent on day care if you can be shown to be establishing a program on day care that is compatible with the national objective with respect to day care.

How that is worked out, whether every province will have exactly the same kind of day care program—I am a realist before everything else and, more than anything else, my realism tells me that it is not going to be possible in the modern Confederation for the Ottawa government to tell every province exactly how it is going to perform and carry out its day care programs.

1720

As far as I am concerned, I do not want that. I do not think it is sound. I do not think it is where social policy is best made. I do not think it is best made by five people in Ottawa telling everybody how he or she ought to run day care. I think we ought to be able to work out a way of having national programs with some degree of flexibility and some understanding.

With respect to the reality of Quebec today, let us not forget that the Quebec pension plan was established as a result of the flexibility built into the use of the spending power. I might also add that it is possible, under the arrangements with respect to pensions, for Ontario to have its own pension plan and to opt out of the Canada pension plan, if that is what it decides to do. I do not find that particularly offensive. It would certainly cause a bit of a national debate, but I do not see anything wrong in having that discussion between provinces and the federal government.

Speaking as a democratic socialist here, I think our party's own philosophy, as I understand it and have felt it across the country, really has quite dramatically evolved to a clearer understanding. If I may say so, my thinking on this has really changed as a result of the constitutional debate that we had in 1980-81.

I went into the House as a young member—I am still very young, but as an even younger member

than I am now—with, I suppose, a traditional kind of centralizing, Frank Scott view of the Constitution, and I must say my views have changed. I do not think it is that simple any more.

The power of the provincial governments is not necessarily a reactionary power. We live in a pluralist society. We live in a pluralist Confederation. I can tell members that, as somebody who is delighted to be doing the job he is doing now, I think it is important that we have the flexibility to make our progress and our gains and to win our victories at the provincial level in terms of improving the quality of programs within a country that has national objectives and programs and within a country in which the federal government sets standards and sets out ways in which it thinks things should be done and has the capacity to go into a province and say, "Look, your programs really are not doing what they are doing in other provinces." There needs to be that co-operation.

The idea that you can have a unitary kind of answer and that there can be a centralist answer to all these questions is naïve. It does not recognize what the country has become. It does not recognize the diversity that exists and it does not recognize the reality that federalism really does give us a flexibility in social terms, of which as a socialist, I can tell members, I fully intend to take advantage and I think we should be taking advantage in terms of moving the province ahead.

On day care, I say to the Premier that we do not need to wait for the feds. We can have the best system possible in this province and we can move on it. Yes, we need a national program too, but we do not have to wait around for the federal government to act. We can do it ourselves, and that is what we think we should be doing.

I am taking time and I am sorry. This is the longest speech I have given in a long time, but as I say, I will not necessarily get this opportunity again. I do not know, maybe I will. Maybe I will give the same one again. I will wrap it up and do it tomorrow, if members like.

I have some real problems with the amending formula. I said earlier that I cannot quite understand how certain people came to this agreement. I want to be charitable to everybody concerned, but I would like to hear an explanation as to how it is that Premier Getty changed the amending formula with respect to the Senate and thought he had won a victory.

I have thought about it. I do not stay up nights worrying about these questions, but I must confess I do sometimes reflect on this and how an

amending formula that now requires unanimity with respect to federal institutions is a win or a plus for those provinces that are desperate to have triple-E or triple-A or triple-O, whatever it may be, Senate reform. I do not understand that.

We had too much rigidity in the old amending formula with respect to Senate reform. I can remember discussing this one day with Senator Roblin, the former leader of the Conservative Party in Manitoba, who said the reason he was opposed to the Constitution as it was then being introduced was that the amending formula was so rigid that we would never see Senate reform, which was something he very strongly believed in. I would have thought he would be quite happy where he was but he apparently somehow wanted it amended or reformed in some way.

To have a requirement of unanimity as a solution to this I do not understand. I do not get it. Maybe I am missing something, but my experience of giving everybody in the world a veto is that it makes things harder to get rather than easier to get. If either I am wrong or I missed the boat on this one I would like to hear about it, but I think it does not add up.

The fact that the federal government has now said Senate reform is on the top of the agenda may be—but, my goodness, Senate reform has been on the top—what is the name of the federal Justice minister, the guy who had the 23 doctorates?

Mrs. Grier: Mark MacGuigan.

Mr. Grossman: He taught me constitutional law.

Mr. Rae: That explains the member's position today. Now I understand his speech. The Leader of the Opposition has just told me that Dr. MacGuigan taught him constitutional law. Now it is all clear to me; now I understand.

When he was the Minister of Justice he had many consultative papers on Senate reform. This question is an old friend. To say that it is going to be at the top of the agenda for the next two years—I could be wrong. It may be that Senate reform will happen. It may be that there is some other agreement that was arrived at that is not written down here which, again, with a nudge or a wink or some sort of deal—I do not know. I have no way of knowing that.

All I can tell the members is that if I were looking at this as a horse player from the outside, I would not put the mortgage down on Senate reform for quite a while. It seems to me that when you build in an amending formula that makes it tougher to get agreement, you are building in inflexibility and not flexibility.

I might also add while the Premier is listening that, with respect to the introduction of new provinces into Confederation, I think moving them around into the requirement of unanimity is also a mistake. If that can be changed, it should be changed.

The question of the desire, particularly on the part of the Yukon—we all understand that is now more of a reality in the next generation. I have discussed this question, obviously. If that is going to be a possibility for the 1980s or 1990s or into the 21st century, the way to make it happen is not to make it practically impossible to happen. I would suggest that if we had this amending formula prior to the creation of new provinces after the original four, we might not have had any new provinces. I think that is something that has to be recognized as a problem.

We come to the question of the so-called second round, which again I gather is going to be entrenched in the Constitution. My problem with this is that we are putting a whole lot of stuff into the Constitution that really is an administrative understanding between Premiers as to how things will be worked out. I have some real problems with that.

I have difficulty with Senate reform being the most important question, as opposed to aboriginal rights. I must tell the Premier that if I had to make a choice between aboriginal rights and what to do about the Senate, even having been a lifelong opponent of the Senate I am prepared to leave it be. It is expensive but basically harmless. Senators live well but most of them do not really hurt anybody. I think we ought to leave it like that or get rid of it, if that is possible. Again, I do not attach a lot of hope to abolition given that one has to have 11 premiers agree on that principle.

1730

I say to the Premier in all seriousness that if he comes out of this thing with one win with respect to getting aboriginal rights back on that agenda, that is going to be an area of importance for the people of this province and for the people of Canada.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That is already in section 41. You know that.

Mr. Rae: I know that. I am not talking about section 41, I am talking about what is on the second round and what is going to be entrenched in the Constitution with respect to the items on the agenda.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: A much better chance with Quebec in.

Mr. Rae: The Premier says, "A much better chance with Quebec in." I hope that is true, but I also say to the Premier that unless that question, the question of the position of our first citizens, is put back higher on the priority list, it will not happen. Why will it not happen? Because of what I discussed at the beginning. If it is simply a question of governments talking about their powers, none of them are prepared to give up those powers with respect to native people.

I must say I am offended when the major objection from Vander Zalm and Devine and Getty with respect to native rights is, "If we put wording in and we do not know exactly what it means and we do not know exactly what it is going to do and we do not know exactly how it is going to be interpreted, it will not go in."

That is the rule for the native people; but when it comes to Quebec's distinct society I ask the Attorney General of Ontario, "What does it mean?" and he says: "I do not know. I guess the courts will have to decide." I hope this will not be misunderstood, but if that is good enough for Quebec it ought to be good enough for our native people.

I think it is time we recognized that we are never going to have an agreement that everybody understands and that is never going to be litigated. The definition of an agreement is a document that is going to be litigated and disputed, and what we have is a mechanism, through an entrenched Supreme Court, for dealing with some of those questions. I really do believe that we have a historic obligation to come to terms with the civilization of our native people and the spiritual values and the economic and social needs of that community, and that has not been done. We have never done that in our history, and we are not doing it now. I do not think anybody can feel good.

In my response to the Premier's first statement in this House I referred to the fact there were many headlines saying that the last piece was in the constitutional puzzle. I do not feel that. I do not think any of us can go across the whole of this province and sit down on reserves, as the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and I have done, and talk in ways that are just heart-wrenching about the aspirations and the problems and the sense of the gap between us in terms of the rights and sense of community and the whole need for us to really deal with this historic reconciliation of a real kind—and we are not there yet.

I say to the Premier, frankly, that Ontario perhaps could say, a little tougher than was said

the last time, "If we want to get moving on the Senate, which is yours, let us keep the native peoples question high on the list." I do not see a sign that is being done.

I want to close—and I say that with sighs of audible relief around the room—by saying I have not intended my remarks in a destructive way. I have questions to raise about the agreement that was arrived at. I feel very strongly about the process. I do not think we have this question of constitutional reform right in terms of process. I do not think we have figured out nationally how to do it. I do not think this is the right way to proceed. I think there is insufficient discussion. I feel there are very legitimate questions that the Premier himself cannot answer. I went to the same law school he did. None of us has an automatic answer to these questions, and I think it would be appropriate and entirely right for us to have a period of time when a number of people would get together and say, "This is what this means and this is what this means."

There is almost a sense that if you talk about the agreement too much, somehow it will all fly apart. I do not know, that may be true; but I would suggest that if that is true then it is not worth a whole lot, because if it does not withstand some kind of analysis and parsing, careful textual analysis and pulling apart and a sense of what it all means, then we have not done our job. That is what we are paid to do. That is what we are expected to do. We are not expected to simply stand up and say, "Yea, an agreement has been arrived at." If we do not all stand up and say it is wonderful we are somehow stopping the constitutional train.

I went through this once before. I have a lot of questions about what happened the last time. I am not going to not speak my mind this time and not have an opportunity to say we have to think it through carefully and give it some questioning

and some thought and say at the same time that, yes, it is important that Quebec be in the Constitution; it is also important that we do it right. I hope the Premier will accept that the thrust of what I am saying is that it should be done right.

Having said all that, let me end where I started; that is, by saying I think to some extent we get all wound up in a ball of wax about stuff that, frankly, is less important than the substance of the programs that are really of importance to our constituents.

Dave Barrett once said to me he did not know anybody in his riding who lost one night's sleep over the Constitution. I must confess that when I heard it that way, I reflected for a moment and thought about all the high thoughts, words and emotions that had been expressed in our caucus over a two-year or three-year period about this question. There is a lot of truth in that.

I think it is important to do it. I think it is important to do it right. I think it is also important for us to remember that the essence, the foundation of what we do, is people. The foundation of what we do is the services and the justice we offer to our citizens—not the theoretical wording, not the theoretical structures, not the structure of justice which excludes so many people; it is not the Constitution, which is inaccessible in real terms, to millions of Canadians.

I enter into this discussion with a degree of trepidation. I have taken a bit long, because I wanted to get some thoughts off my chest. Having gotten them off my chest, let us get on to some other things.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Wednesday, May 27, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, May 27, 1987

The House met at 1:33 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CROP INSURANCE

Mr. Andrewes: As spring moves into summer, Ontario farmers face yet another season of uncertainty as a result of turbulent markets and trade pressures. This uncertainty is heightened further by the risks of weather.

Last summer and fall, heavy rainfall flooded field crops in southwestern Ontario and hail storms caused havoc in the Niagara Peninsula. The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell), after giving farm groups a rude and impolite reception, acknowledged that the province's crop insurance program needed a full review. A review committee reported some weeks ago, but to date its recommendations remain shrouded in secrecy in the minister's office. There was not a mention of reform of the crop insurance program in the throne speech and not a dollar allocated in the budget of last week.

Why is the minister sitting on this report? Is he not prepared to listen to the advice of his committee? Does he fear that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) will wince when asked to give substance to the recommendation?

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Mr. Martel: I would like to thank the Canadian Sports, Spine and Head Injuries Research Centre at Toronto Western Hospital, particularly Dr. Charles Tator and Virginia Edmonds, who have just provided me with the most recent figures, a compilation of the past 13 years in Canada, of sports injuries in hockey.

Fifty per cent of the injuries were in Ontario: 54 spinal injuries from a total of 107 in Canada. Of that number, 87 per cent of the known injuries were to the neck, 65 per cent had spinal cord injuries and 95 per cent of the injuries happened in organized games. The kids can play without interference and without getting hurt, but they cannot when organized. Of the known injuries, 34 per cent occurred when players were pushed or struck from behind, a rule we refuse to change, 80 per cent of the injured players were struck or

struck the boards and five injured players died in Canada.

This is supposed to be sport. In fact, it is a human tragedy to have 107 young people injured, 57 per cent of whom will be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of their lives. I know there is a report coming down shortly from the Ontario Sport Medicine and Safety Advisory Board and I hope the recommendations will lead to an end to this mayhem.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. Bernier: The northern health travel grant program introduced several months ago has been an outstanding success and of great assistance to over 30,000 northerners last year. When the program was introduced, the one-way-travel distance requirement was established at 300 kilometres. However, this arbitrary distance figure excluded 20,000 residents of the general Kenora area who have sought and still seek medical attention in Winnipeg, only 205 kilometres distant.

I have appealed to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and I have appealed to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in his capacity as Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I have appealed to both of them to end this discrimination and bring fairness and equity into this travel assistance program for the northerners located in this particular region. The Minister of Health did respond to a certain degree and recently announced the distance reduction of 250 kilometres. However, believe it or not, he is still denying the 20,000 residents of the Kenora area the benefits of this program by a mere 45 kilometres.

Once again, I urge the minister and the Premier to pick up a road map and examine the mileage figures in northern Ontario. Travelling from Kenora to Winnipeg, which is 205 kilometres, is like travelling from Toronto to St. Thomas, Ontario.

I ask them to listen to the 20,000 people of the Kenora area, bring some fairness into the program and reduce this arbitrary figure to include all northern Ontario residents who deserve to reap the benefits of this northern health travel assistance program.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Reville: The government promised to protect the tenants of Ontario. The catalogue of broken promises is fat indeed. Tenants were promised a streamlined rent review process. It is clear that the rent review process is anything but streamlined and that a couple of years from now applications will still clutter the desks of rent review administrators.

Tenants were promised a maintenance review board. It has been appointed but it has yet to meet, some five months later. The tenants were promised a rent registry so they could find out whether their rents were legal or not. The rent registry will not be operating until the end of this summer and then only part of the rents will be registered.

As for the rent review services offices, which I understand were designed to deliver on the promise of education for tenants, the experience we have when we call is that the line is busy or an answering service says someone will get back to the caller in three days. One gets absolutely wacky advice that says if one does not sign a lease one will be evicted. That is incorrect advice.

This is not a swamp; this is a fen of stagnant waters. The minister should be ashamed.

1340

COBOURG SESQUICENTENNIAL

Mr. Sheppard: I am delighted to rise today to announce the Cobourg sesquicentennial celebrations are at present in full swing, with a number of festive events planned for the remainder of this calendar year. The program includes antique shows, arts and crafts displays and numerous concerts and plays, not to mention all types of competitions.

Some of the highlights this summer include a two-week fishing derby beginning June 22 and the Can-Am Keel Boat Regatta Invitational USA on July 3, 4 and 5.

No sesquicentennial celebration would be complete without a parade. It will be held on June 27, and our very special guest will be none other than the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor Lincoln Alexander.

I would like to extend an invitation to all members of the Legislature to come out to Cobourg this summer for a day or a weekend to enjoy the celebrations and the food and to see the sights. Cobourg is a bubbling community with a touch of country flavour.

DRIVER EXAMINATIONS

Mr. Warner: Unfortunately, due to the lack of capacity of this government to run departments properly, there are a number of young people who will be denied a job opportunity this year simply because in order to obtain a job they need a driver's licence. In order to get a driver's licence, they have to go to the driver examination centre. There is a three-month backup in most of the centres throughout the province.

For example, in Scarborough, one of the largest offices with 13 examiners, they do over 200 examinations a day and yet they still have a three-month backlog. The cutbacks have been going on for several years. They started with the Tories, but the cutbacks continue under the new Liberal government, the new Tories with the red ties.

The work load increases, of course, because now seniors, for example, have to be examined each year. Renewals are done more often in the offices, instead of by mail as they used to be. Rather than the government responding with extra staff so as to process the examinations, it allows the cutbacks to continue and the backlog to grow. Unfortunately, a number of young people who could use the extra money and the job are denied that opportunity because by the time the three months of waiting is up the job is long gone. Unfortunately, the government needs to repair its own shop.

POLICE PURSUITS

Mr. Sargent: Regarding the story in today's press of the Ontario Provincial Police probe of the tragic death of a 17-year-old girl in Midland caused by a police chase, regardless of the independent investigation which is now on the public of Ontario has had a bellyful of the senseless cops-and-robbers game which, in most cases, ends in disaster.

Maybe it is time that charges should be laid against the officer or officers who give an okay for such a police chase. In any event, it should not be left to a single officer to make such a decision.

Regardless of what that family in Midland is going through now, I ask, how many more lives will be lost before this practice stops?

Mr. McLean: I had a statement prepared on exactly the same subject the last speaker was referring to. I too am concerned about when these police chases are going to stop in order that what happened in Midland last weekend will not happen again and innocent people will not be killed.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

CANADA WINTER GAMES

Hon. Mr. Eakins: As the minister responsible for sport, recreation and fitness in the province, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to Ontario's young athletes who competed in this year's Canada Winter Games.

For the fourth time in a row, Ontario's young athletes have won the coveted Canada Games flag. In fact, Team Ontario has won eight of the 11 Canada Games championships since the games began.

Ontario competed in 18 sports and won a total of 211 points. The 252 athletes, coaches and managers brought home 80 medals: 20 gold, 26 silver and 34 bronze. Their victory was hard fought and hard won.

I am very proud that this government contributes in a major way to the development of our province's amateur athletes.

On behalf of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the people of Ontario, I ask members to join me in congratulating our wonderful young athletes for their outstanding performances at the 1987 Canada Winter Games by welcoming three representatives of the Ontario team—Ken White, Jennifer Cook and Andrew Motomura—who are with us in the gallery today.

SPORTS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Hon. Mr. Eakins: I have an additional announcement to make at this time.

Ontario is being visited by a swim team from Jiangsu, China. These athletes, who are accompanied by their coach, Mr. Xhiang, are part of a first ever international sports exchange program between Ontario and China. They are here to train at the University of Toronto swim club.

Ontario's badminton and table tennis group is now in Nanjing, Jiangsu, the home of some of the best badminton and table tennis expertise in the world today.

I am pleased to tell the members of this House that the swim team, Mr. Xhiang and members of the York University staff are with us today. I am sure that my colleagues in the House join me in wishing our visitors a productive and memorable stay in Ontario.

ONTARIO SOIL MAINTENANCE GRANT

Hon. Mr. Riddell: As honourable members are well aware, there has been and continues to be a dramatic rationalization of the entire tobacco industry in this province. Tobacco growers have been particularly hard hit by this.

In response, this government has brought in programs to help tobacco producers find and evaluate alternative crops. Last month we announced, in co-operation with the federal government, a comprehensive aid package for growers faced with falling demand: the \$30-million tobacco assistance program. This program pays farmers to take land permanently out of tobacco production. This could represent a reduction of as much as 10,000 acres over the next three years.

Our concern for the people affected by this upheaval must also extend to concern for the future use and productivity of the land in question and what happens to it in the meantime. This House is well acquainted with the history of our tobacco-growing areas. Over a period of 50 years or so, these regions were transformed from virtual dust bowls to productive farm land.

The land in the tobacco regions that is being taken out of production faces an increased threat from soil erosion and soil degradation during this interim period. However, as members can appreciate, the farmers involved are probably the ones least able to make the necessary financial investment themselves to combat this.

To preserve the productivity of lands in the tobacco-growing regions for the future, I am pleased to announce today the establishment of the Ontario soil maintenance grant as part of the federal-provincial tobacco assistance program, a three-year, \$30-million initiative.

Under the new \$3-million Ontario program, farmers who take tobacco acreage out of production will be eligible for grants to plant soil-building and erosion control crops. Growers who have transferred basic production quota under the acreage reduction section of the tobacco assistance program are eligible for the new grants.

The money will help planting of approved soil-building and erosion control crops such as winter rye, red clover, perennial ryegrass and trees. Grants will be paid on approved crops in place during July of each year of the program. The deadline for applications this year is June 30.

Tobacco growers who have sold their quota need time to finalize their future cropping plans. The soil maintenance grant will encourage good soil management while providing planned income for growers over this transitional period. It is part of a larger effort by this government to promote good land stewardship.

RESPONSES

ONTARIO SOIL MAINTENANCE GRANT

Mr. Harris: I want to respond briefly to the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell).

I would not be one to dispute the difficulty that farmers around the area of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) are experiencing and the \$30 million that may be necessary to help them overcome problems, but while we are on Ontario soil maintenance and alternative crops, I think it is maybe in context and it is important to bring to the House that west Nipissing farmers are facing similar problems. They are having difficulties with the crops they are growing and markets for those crops.

I find it ironic that when they applied, they applied for a little bit of assistance from this minister to help themselves. The stated policy of the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson) is that northerners have to be able to help themselves. That is the answer. When the minister does not know what to do for two years, he says, "They have to be able to help themselves." They have been coming up with ideas and solution after solution and they have all been rejected or ignored. I have mentioned many of those in the House, but particularly today, because we are on alternative crops. I want to talk about the minister's failure to address the needs of west Nipissing farmers who banded together, were prepared to make property available at little or no cost and asked for a little bit of research assistance for themselves with the west Nipissing experimental farm.

Just \$500,000, not \$30 million, would have made such a huge difference not only to west Nipissing but also for the climatic conditions that are similar for our farmers and extend all the way across the lake right over to Sault Ste. Marie. Interestingly enough, the minister signed a letter saying no, he takes the results from up north in Timiskaming, they are pretty close. Timiskaming is about as close to those climatic conditions as London is to Kingston or as Toronto is to Sarnia. The guys down here in southern Ontario think they understand it, but they do not realize the climatic differences, they do not realize the growing differences and they have completely failed to understand the problems that the farmers are having in the west Nipissing part of my riding.

They made a legitimate request for \$500,000 worth of assistance to be able to help not only themselves but also those farmers who have the

same climatic conditions all the way along the lake, as I mentioned, to Sault Ste. Marie. The silly answer we get is: "We are already doing some research in Timiskaming. It is the same." It is not even close to the same climatic conditions, particularly if one looks at what little test results there are available from the federal government. They point out that in Timiskaming they could not even consider corn, whereas in west Nipissing they can grow corn. I am not a farmer, but as I am told by the farmers in my riding, there is a significant climatic difference when one talks about the number of heat units and weather there.

The minister makes announcement after announcement. They all sound wonderful. They all sound great. I do not know whether his programs do any good. Most of the farmers I talk to do not seem to think they do. This was a solution from northern Ontario farmers, from the West Nipissing Agricultural Association, supported by the five councils representative of the West Nipissing Municipal Association, "Here is a way we can help ourselves; you have asked for us to come up with solutions to help ourselves," and the minister said no.

I would ask the minister to take a look at that application instead of just signing something that somebody shoves in front of his face and saying no. I would ask him to take a serious look at it and at how much that could turn around the future for the farmers in west Nipissing.

CANADA WINTER GAMES

Mr. Warner: I think it is fair to say that all the members of this House, and indeed the people of this province of ours, are justifiably proud of the young people who have represented this province at the Canada Winter Games. The young people of our province represent the vitality of our province. They are the hope for our future and they have done us all proud as they brought back the Canada Games flag. I hope they enjoy their stay here today. They will no doubt note, of course, that the only kind of sporting activity that goes on in this chamber is philosophic duelling and verbal gymnastics. Beyond that, we certainly do not achieve the high level of success that our athletes have achieved.

SPORTS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Mr. Warner: Additionally, I am very pleased, on behalf of my party, to welcome those athletes who have come from our twinned province in China. That twinning, in my view, is something about which we can all be very proud. I hope Mr. Xhiang, the members of the York

University staff and the athletes who are here enjoy their stay and will take back with them to China many happy memories and, of course, will pay us a visit on another occasion.

ONTARIO SOIL MAINTENANCE GRANT

Mr. Laughren: I would like to respond to the statement by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell). The minister stood in his place today and made reference to a \$30-million federal-provincial program to aid farmers to adjust to the rationalization of the tobacco industry.

A couple of weeks ago, this party laid before the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) a program under which, if he added one cent of tax per cigarette, it would raise \$200 million in Ontario. We stated in our position paper that one half of that \$200 million, \$100 million, would go for adjustment policies for farmers. I think some of it should go as well to the tobacco processing industry. The other \$100 million should go to health-related problems associated with tobacco. It could go into the stop-smoking clinics and any other programs that are related to helping people to stop smoking.

This is not an attempt to injure the tobacco farmers of the province. Our proposal is an attempt to do two things at once: first, to allow farmers to adjust to the new reality of a decrease in smoking; and second, to deal with the health problems related to smoking.

In Ontario now the provincial tax for cigarettes is under three cents per cigarette. That is the lowest cigarette tax in all of Canada. What we suggested was that raising that to four cents a cigarette, an increase of a little over a cent a cigarette, would raise \$200 million and put us at about the average of cigarette taxes in all the various provinces across Canada.

It would not be the kind of tax that would be too difficult for people who simply have a great deal of difficulty quitting, but it would be a real incentive for people to stop smoking. As well, we think there are about 12,000 smoking-related deaths per year in Ontario. This would go at least some way towards alleviating that problem.

The response of the Treasurer was to increase the tobacco tax in the province not one jot. I understand the constituency he represents, but I think he allowed that to cloud his judgement in this regard.

I am simply saying to the government yet again that it would not have been crippling to the industry. It would have provided a major source

of funds, both for health-related programs and for the industry.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food talks about a \$3-million Ontario program. That is a pittance. Even with the federal government, we are talking about only \$30 million. Our proposal would have raised \$200 million and certainly makes the efforts of the Minister of Agriculture and Food look pretty puny. What the Minister of Agriculture and Food is talking about is not a program; it is a poor excuse for one.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: My question is for the Premier. Like the rest of us, I am sure, the Premier will have had an opportunity now to see the anguished and pained words of the former Prime Minister with regard to the Meech Lake accord.

Mr. Foulds: He's not capable of either. Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier may not be sensitive to the words of the former Prime Minister, but I think any sensible reading of the article will indicate a great deal of pain and anguish on behalf of the former Prime Minister.

I want to admit to the Premier that our party has been unsuccessful in trying to argue the case for public hearings in Ontario. I do not know: it could be because he has thought our arguments are without merit, it could be because he has thought they were too partisan in nature; but whatever, we have been unsuccessful to date in convincing him to have public hearings.

I wonder if the Premier today might take advantage of the important contribution made by the former Prime Minister and say, "Yes, these kinds of views ought to be heard in a public forum in Ontario," and admit that it might be the right time to have public hearings in Ontario on the Meech Lake accord.

1400

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I not only appreciate the sympathetic words expressed by the Leader of the Opposition for the former Prime Minister, I also have sympathy for his pain and anguish in this particular regard. I did not have the same sense when I read the article; and yes, I read it with great interest. Canadian politics always fascinate me. We see these strange and new alliances that develop from time to time as issues of public policy emerge.

I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that the former Prime Minister's views have been

expressed in a very public place, the most public of places, and I am one who welcomes his contribution. I think he has every right to express his views on the Meech Lake accord, as does the honourable member and anyone else. There is now developing in the country a substantial debate. We started that yesterday here in the House on the principles.

At the moment, we do not have the specific wording. I say to my honourable friend that we will have a full debate in this House, beyond dispute. It will take as much time as is necessary. My friend felt that I was hiding from him yesterday the fact that we have three years to approve of this in this province. It is in the Constitution and I assumed my friend knew that at the time. I apologize for my omission in that regard.

Mr. Grossman: I was the first one to tell the House about that fact.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I made a miscalculation. I had assumed the honourable members opposite had read the Constitution some time ago. I took, in a sense, judicial notice of that fact. I could have been wrong.

In that regard, I look forward to a full debate in this House. I believe the members should call on any advice necessary. I believe we should take the time that is necessary in order to have that full discussion. One of the things that is obvious to me, particularly from the debate yesterday and other discussions, is that part of our responsibility is to be not only involved in answering questions as best we can but engaging in public education as well.

A number of questions have been raised. I think I know the answer to those and I think they are quite obvious. Others may disagree with those, of course, but I think everyone had every right to ask those questions and to put forward their views as they saw fit. I think we will have to arrange between the House leaders at some time in the future how we go about making sure that this debate receives the full attention of all members, that everyone has an opportunity to express his views and to get whatever other advice is necessary in the formulation of those views.

Mr. Grossman: I am mystified as to how the Premier can take the position this afternoon that the answers to those questions are obvious. The answers to the questions that this party has been posing, that Eugene Forsey and others have been

posing, have begged different answers. The questions got different answers from Premier Bourassa and the Premier of Ontario, from Ontario's Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in Quebec. Yesterday, the answers to a lot of the questions we raised were delivered by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who answered most of our concerns and the concerns expressed by many people by saying our concerns are justified. So the answers, with respect, are not obvious and all that has been happening across this country is answers that largely contradict each other.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Grossman: Given that and given the concerns of the former Prime Minister, who says those Canadians who fought for a single Canada, bilingual and multicultural, can say goodbye to their dream, I wonder if the Premier will not agree today that his interpretation, the interpretation of Eugene Forsey and others ought simply to be put to the test of public hearings, not after a document is signed but before?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The answer is that I do not think that is possible. We are meeting next Tuesday and that is the reality of the situation. As I said to my honourable friend, we will have a full debate in this House before it is formally ratified.

Again, with respect to the former Prime Minister, I respect his views on the subject. Frankly, they are views with which I and a substantial number of other people disagree. Some are political and some are legal interpretations. Mr. Trudeau had a very strong view of this country. The member will recall he put forward proposals some five and one half years ago that were adopted by nine out of 10 provinces, not 10. His vision was universally rejected in Quebec at that time.

Now we have an opportunity to bring Quebec into the Constitution. Some believe that is a worthwhile objective. Some believe that accommodations have to be made in order to do that. Some would disagree on the extent of those accommodations. I say to my honourable friend, I think they are reasonable accommodations.

In response to one of his questions yesterday, "Will it, for example, prevent the federal government from engaging in national social programs?" the answer is a very clear no. It does not prevent that, in my opinion and in the opinion of many other people. There is no difference, for example, in the Canada assistance plan, the Canada pension plan and a variety of other programs.

I think it accommodates the realities of this country, I think it builds a co-operative framework to solve problems in the future and I think it is a progressive approach to that. If the member does not I am interested in hearing his view, obviously, but that is my view on the subject.

Mr. Grossman: The question, if I could have the Premier's attention for a second, is very much not whether we want Quebec to sign the constitutional document but the conditions and price to be paid for it. He has given his interpretation that it is a very little price.

The former Prime Minister's interpretation is, "Say goodbye to the dream of one Canada." As someone who devoted almost all his career to fighting for the constitutional arrangements which I suppose would speak for Quebec and would serve Quebec as he interprets it in this article today, surely his opinions are extremely important.

Might I simply put this proposition to the Premier—

Mr. Speaker: By way of question?

Mr. Grossman: —by way of a final supplementary. The former Prime Minister has accused current political leaders in this country of lacking in courage. I wonder if the Premier could respond to that by showing the courage to have public hearings and put his views and the views of Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Forsey, Mr. Bourassa, Mr. Pawley and other constitutional experts before the public, so that everyone may know the accord that he proposes to sign as soon as next week. Is that not a fair test of courage?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I read the article with great interest. I heard some of the adjectives used to describe provincial Premiers who were unanimous on the question, and to describe the present Prime Minister as well in that regard. I will not comment on the adjectives that were used to describe the situation, but suffice it to say that I think there is unanimity across this country by the current political leadership. It is unanimous, as someone said yesterday. Regardless of party—Conservative, New Democratic, Social Credit; Liberal as well—contemporary leaders gathered in a room trying to solve contemporary problems that will have a major impact on our future.

Let my honourable friend who has posed some questions have the courage to give us his views on the subject. He quoted Eugene Forsey. I can tell my honourable friend my views on the subject. I will tell him to discuss it as much as he would possibly like. It is an interest of great concern to me.

Mr. Grossman: You were in the room. Why don't you tell us what documents you think you signed? You haven't shared them yet.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think I have the sense of the Premiers, the Prime Minister, as well as the expert advice we have gathered up; and that is considerable across the country, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to share that with you, defend it any time or listen in this House for a gathering of the best distilled wisdom that all the members and outside experts have to offer.

Mr. Grossman: You had your chance yesterday. You won't have public hearings. Why don't you use your chance? Why don't you stand and defend it?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: You haven't defended it for one minute yet. You have had all the rhetoric but no defence.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Leader of the Opposition have a new question? New question.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Health. I asked the minister last week and today I wonder if he is now prepared to explain to the residents of Barrie how the government could increase its civil service by some 5,000 people yet continue to not provide funds for a new hospital.

Hon. Mr. Elston: We are providing a number of new programs around this province and throughout the ministries. The question of delivering new services always requires us to provide for the employment of new people. The programs cannot be delivered, quite frankly, without the hiring of new people. I can understand the member's concern about the need for a hospital. We are looking at that, and I thank the honourable gentleman for bringing it to our attention at this time.

1410

Mr. Rowe: Yesterday the board of directors of the Royal Victoria Hospital, in a desperate measure to try and deal with the overwhelming demand for hospital care, reluctantly approved a portable to deal with emergency cases. Perhaps the minister has been watching too many MûÀùSùH reruns. Are portables, instead of desperately needed funding for a hospital, the minister's new health care policy?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I think the honourable gentleman would want to know that this is not for the emergency patients but it is a facility that will be used for triage, for nonemergency patients in

the emergency room areas. I do not find it a very satisfactory situation.

I can understand the pressures the board has come under and I commend the board for taking the necessary steps in the light of the space problems that it has brought to my attention and that the honourable gentleman has brought to our attention. We are looking at what is available and possible there.

It is not the first time we have heard about this. It is not the first time the honourable gentleman has brought this to our attention, nor is it the first time that a number of people who have been members for the Barrie area have brought it to the attention of the government. However, we are planning a very careful allocation of resources. Together with my colleagues in cabinet, we review what is possible and appropriate in terms of redevelopment for capital structures, which are obviously run down after years of neglect.

Mr. Rowe: Overcrowding at this hospital has been so severe that patients have had to be left in the corridors in the past, and the minister knows how dangerous that is. Even with this portable, by the hospital's own report, "greater than 10 admissions would require allocation of patients to the corridors on the wards." This is the first hospital in Ontario with a portable.

When is the minister going to stop playing politics and get on with the job of a new hospital in Barrie?

Hon. Mr. Elston: We are not playing politics with this particular program. As I have told this gentleman before, it takes an awful lot of work to deal with the planning that is required to put in place an appropriate facility. I appreciate that a lot of people have done planning over the years and they have worked very hard with respect to announcements that have been made before. We are very sensitive to the problems he has brought to our attention and they are being addressed in co-operation with the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the rest of our cabinet colleagues.

We will be advising the member further if there are any development plans to be announced. He will be, like every other member who has a facility to be announced, invited to any announcement. He will be thanked for his participation. I appreciate the dedication of the staff there. I appreciate the board, in making its decision to move to do some temporary implementations, is working under very restrictive conditions.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Rae: My question is to the Minister of Labour. I want to ask the minister about the very

tragic death which took place in February of a 22-year-old worker who quit school in order to pay for his disabled family. He was killed on a work site at Harbourfront, the Huang and Danczkay project, which was started illegally without a building permit. Stefano Rizzi died on February 10, 1987.

On January 29, an inspector from the Ministry of Labour attended the site, was there for three hours, and issued several work orders stating that the orders should be complied with by no later than 4:30, Thursday, January 29. In addition, the company was ordered under section 7 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act to cause a health and safety representative to be selected by the union or unions. The inspector came on the site at 8:45 in the morning and left at 12:05.

Despite the fact that the inspector said the order should be complied with by 4:30 in the afternoon, he did not return. Apparently no effort was made by the ministry to find out whether the company had complied with these orders.

Can the minister explain to us why an inspector would go on a site, issue several orders with respect to health and safety and then not discover whether those orders had been complied by the company?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: As the honourable gentleman knows, we have been making every effort, and indeed are continuing to make every effort, to properly staff the various branches of the occupational health and safety division.

When the government took office some 23 months ago, we had 66 funded positions for inspectors in the construction health and safety branch. The number of funded positions is now 111. The number of individuals we have hired is over 90 today. There have been recent competitions and there have literally been thousands of applicants. We are hiring just as quickly as we can in order to bring that branch, and indeed the whole division, up to the levels that it ought to have.

That being said, the honourable gentleman raises a very serious matter. The inspector had been there. The honourable gentleman has noted that the inspection was a very thorough one. A number of orders were left and indeed the inspector spent some three and a half hours there. The reason we are hiring additional people is exactly the problem of the lack of follow-up to which the honourable leader of the third party alludes. There is a terrible backup in terms of the number of construction sites we have and our ability to get them inspected.

I can only say to the honourable member and to the House that we are hiring just as quickly as possible. I have asked that all hiring that has been approved be expedited so that we can get on with the job of reducing the cycle of inspections from its present level—I believe it has dropped below eight weeks to seven or six weeks—and be able to do those follow-up visits in a timely fashion.

Mr. Rae: I did not hear an answer to my question. This death took place nearly two years after the minister took office. There have been 41 construction deaths in this province this last year. To read the story of Stefano Rizzi, to hear the evidence at the inquest and to hear the recommendations of the coroner's jury is to think that literally no change has taken place in this province since the government took over.

I would like to ask the minister a basic question. Can he tell us why, if the record of the government is so good, it is apparently the practice of the ministry to issue orders and then not to establish whether those orders have been complied with? Can the minister answer that question?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: First of all, I want to say I am pleased to see that the leader of the third party, as opposed to the members of the official opposition, understands that it is important to add additional personnel. It is not surprising that the members of the official opposition, who for so many years starved the occupational health and safety division—

Mr. Gillies: You aren't hiring one inspector we didn't have in 1981 so don't give us that garbage. You are returning it to the staffing level of five years ago.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), who was so busy criticizing the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) on this matter yesterday, is inaccurate today just as he was yesterday. I think the member for Brantford and the official opposition are a little embarrassed by their doubletalk on this issue.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the minister have a response?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Yes. I would say to the honourable member, who raises a very important and serious question, that in most cases—in fact, I would hope in all cases—follow-up visits to check on compliance are done. On a number of occasions, I will say quite candidly to the honourable gentleman, those follow-up visits are not done in as timely a fashion as they ought to be. That is why we are hiring the additional

personnel the official opposition has objected to so greatly.

I can say to the honourable gentleman that while he thinks nothing has changed, the fact of the matter is that we have more than 200 people in the occupational health and safety division today who were not in that division 23 months ago. In the construction health and safety branch alone, the increase is in the range of 80 to 85 per cent.

Mr. Rae: I want to keep going with this question because I do not think we are getting an answer. I would like to ask the minister if he can tell us whether it is the intention of the ministry to lay any charges against the company in this matter.

1420

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am looking at my briefing notes. As the honourable gentleman knows—and he was raising this matter in the case of another incident—normally the consideration of charges in the case where there is a coroner's inquest follows the decision of the coroner's jury.

Mr. Martel: Except in Sudbury you lay the charges first.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I see my friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) remembers the other incident, in which it happened in a different way. It is a different kind of charge, but the consideration of charges under the Occupational Health and Safety Act usually follows the inquest. It will be doing so in this case. These matters are under consideration and the appropriate action will be taken by the legal services branch once it has reviewed the evidence that has emerged from the inquest.

Mr. Speaker: New question. The member for York South.

Mr. Rae: I had intended to ask a different minister a question, but I find the answers of the minister so completely unsatisfactory that I think we have to get to the bottom of this question.

What does the minister intend to do about the recommendation from the coroner's jury? Instead of relying on the ministry, since it is obvious that the ministry cannot do the job and that there is no longer any faith in the ability of the ministry to do the job, would it not make sense to impose a safety levy on all major construction projects, which would mean that there would then be enough funds to support the establishment of workers' safety officers on site all the time to reduce health and safety infractions?

Where we have workers working without guard rails, workers lifting heavy propane contrary to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and against the orders of the Minister of Labour, when we have these kinds of things going on, does he not think it worth while having the companies put some money in so we start saving some lives on the major construction projects in this province?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If the honourable member looks at the Occupational Health and Safety Act, he will find there is a levy paid to the consolidated revenue fund, which was first established, I believe, at \$4 million in 1978. That levy is paid out of the workers' compensation fund, which, as the honourable gentleman knows, is paid by employers. Last year, if memory serves me correctly, the levy was \$7.2 million.

Mr. Rae: The minister is ignoring the problem. The problem is that the inspectors go in, find there is a problem and then are not able to enforce what they find. We found in the case of this inquest that it was clearly established that the young worker involved, 22 years old, supporting his entire family, including a disabled father and two younger brothers who were in school, was doing something which was clearly against the regulations and apparently against the earlier orders of the Ministry of Labour.

Just what additional steps is the minister prepared to take to start saving some lives in this province? That is the issue. That is his job, and it is time he started to do it.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I have a little problem remaining tolerant when I hear that kind of nonsense coming from that honourable gentleman over there, suggesting that those of us over here or any member of this Legislature does not care about the health and safety of workers. That comment is really quite disgraceful. I have spent the last 23 months of my life working to improve health and safety in the work place. Everything we have done may not always be right, may not be perfect, but we have worked very hard.

I can tell the honourable gentleman, if he wants to bother listening, that we have hired over 200 people in the occupational health and safety division and will hire more during this fiscal year. One of the things I can say about this Treasurer, this Premier (Mr. Peterson) and this government is that we care about working people in this province and we are matching our concern with the kind of funding necessary to get the job done.

Mr. Rae: If I can be charitable to the minister, the question is not whether anybody in this House cares more than other people. The question is whether the job is being done and whether the inspections are being followed up with enforcement. That is the question.

For generations, we have had Ministers of Labour who cared about a number of questions. That is not the issue and the minister knows that. That is the frustration of this coroner's jury, because what this coroner's jury said was that the follow-up did not happen. The practice clearly was not followed in the industry. This is a major construction project in a very high-profile area. Everybody knows about it. There are several other major construction projects going on. They make a practical suggestion.

What I would like to know is, what does the minister intend to do to make sure that the act is followed, that it is enforced, that lives are saved and that the tragedy affecting the Rizzi family will not be happening in tens and tens of families across this province because of actions that are not taken that can be taken? That is the tragedy and that is where the ball is, right over there where the minister has the responsibility.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I want to say again to the honourable gentleman, this is an imperfect world and it is an imperfect practice. I cannot offer a specific reason that follow-up was delayed in this matter. I can say that our ability to follow up, to ensure that compliance is being obtained, is better today by about 85 per cent than it was two years ago.

I think the member would want to know that one of the important things as we hire additional inspectors in the construction health and safety branch—and hire them we have been and hire them we will—is that we make sure the people we bring on, the men and women who join that branch and, indeed, the occupational health and safety division, are the best qualified and the best educated people we can get.

We are going to get that job done, and very sad and tragic cases like the Rizzi case ought to give us even more reason to get on with the job as fast as possible.

Mr. Gordon: I am sure the minister is aware that the worker's family cannot sue in civil law. They can only look to workers' compensation for a very minuscule compensation for the death of Mr. Rizzi. I am sure the minister knows it is small comfort to them to know that occupational health and safety inspector did not go back to the work place.

Would the minister tell this House in plain language exactly what orders he has given as a minister to see that occupational health and safety inspectors do go back to construction work sites in this province now and in the future?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: One of the things we have done, which that party over there never did, is to get some construction health and safety inspectors. I may have some disagreements with my friend in the third party, but the disagreements with the official opposition on this issue are just a little more profound.

With the 66 inspectors this government inherited, that inspector would never have been able to inspect that site or a lot of others in the first place, because that inspector would not have existed under the former government.

The inspections were completed and the follow-up should have occurred. We are doing everything we can to get the new construction inspectors on stream just as quickly as we can, to get them trained so that very soon—within two years—we will have double the number of construction inspectors that we hired.

Mr. Gillies: The project should not have been under construction at the time. Talk to your friend Ivan.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: To hear the member for Brantford tell it, who criticizes us for hiring new people, under his regime we would not have hired in the first place.

Mr. Gordon: What we heard the minister say is that he has done nothing. That is what he just said. He said, "We have done nothing." All he talked about was two years ago. That does not count. All he talked about was, "We are going to hire some more safety inspectors." He did not tell us what he is doing to ensure that cases like Mr. Rizzi do not happen again in this province.

He is not saying we are going to ensure that construction sites are inspected within one month of startup. He is not saying we are ready to set aside a certain amount of money from construction projects to see that there are enough inspectors and that sites will be inspected. He is doing nothing. What is he going to do? Tell us today.

1430

Hon. Mr. Wrye: When we took office—
Interjections.

Mr. Gillies: Another history lesson. We want a straight answer.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If the members want an answer, they are going to get it.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: When we took office, we inherited a policy that did not even have compliance, in which orders issued—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We do not want to disturb the member for Sudbury East. New question?

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour regarding Koolatron, on the same issue my leader has just been talking about.

Outside the Legislature yesterday, referring to the company, the minister said, "They are now taking action they should have taken long ago." Since these companies owned by Kulkarni and his brother have a history of significant health and safety problems, and since his officials have been in there occasion after occasion after occasion, will the minister table in the House all the orders issued and the compliance dates? Will he also tell me and this Legislature why it took an anonymous phone call to get the action going last week, rather than the many visits made by his inspectors, which led to a great big fat zero in change? Why did it take an anonymous call? Where were his inspectors?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The case of Koolatron was out for inspection. The inspection had not yet occurred; it was scheduled to occur. Other issues, thought to be more urgent, had taken priority. The actions of the ministry have been swift and direct in this matter. We have issued a number of orders, and in fact, I think we have protected the health and safety of workers at Koolatron.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that at the time of the last inspection, the report of that inspection indicates there were no health and safety concerns. Indeed, the health problems our inspector found very quickly when she went in last Wednesday or Thursday were not present at the time of the last inspection.

Mr. Martel: The minister has to be kidding. He is a joke. His ministry developed a policy called code 99, which for two years I have said ends up eliminating inspections unless there is an injury or a work stoppage. There is no inspection in company after company after company. His code 99: this program, by the way, is called crisis management by his own staff.

I want to know what cycle of inspection existed for all these companies owned by this same bird, who the minister has had plenty of problems with in the past. What testing was done

in all of his companies, and why did the inspections reveal the problems only after an anonymous phone call? In fact, why did it take an anonymous phone call?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: First, I believe they are on a six- or 12-month cycle, I am not sure.

Mr. Martel: Then they should have been inspected, shouldn't they?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If the honourable member would just pipe down for a second, he might get an answer to his question.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) should not even try. He does not know anything about the issue, so please ignore it. At least the honourable member knows a little bit about what he is talking about.

I am informed that in the Koolatron case, after a number of orders which were reissued during the regime of the previous government, the company did finally come into compliance in terms of both the assessment and the control order for isocyanates. The information I have is that it changed its process quite dramatically in February of this year; as a result of that, the company required a new assessment and control program. Neither were done.

I can assure the honourable member that every action will be taken at Koolatron, Vacform and indeed any other related company to ensure that the health and safety of the workers at those companies gets the highest priority.

IDEA CORP.

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Premier, the leader of a government that secretly signed in writing an agreement to the softwood lumber tariff and then did nothing for the lumber workers, that is doing nothing for the laid-off miners, a Liberal government that is now delivering health care out of portables in this province, a Liberal government that is obviously failing in occupational health and safety.

I have a question about another Liberal boondoggle, the mismanagement and mishandling of the IDEA Corp. funds, and specifically why the Premier continues to be involved in a coverup of this mismanagement of the public's money.

I am specifically referring to the Biddell report, which was announced in this Legislature on October 14, 1986. The minister at the time said, "I have indicated to Mr. Biddell that his report should be completed as quickly as possible." During estimates in December, we

were told that this report was basically complete and that in a week or so, when Mr. Biddell returned from holidays, it would be finalized. Now we see, in the auditor's report on Graham Software in February 1987, that the Biddell report existed and was dated as of February 1987.

It is three months later. Why does the Premier continue to refuse to release this report to the members of the Legislature?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Frankly, I do not know the status of that, but I will be happy to make inquiries and get back to the honourable member.

Mr. Gillies: We in the opposition want to know what possible interest this government would have, after the two scandals it has faced arising out of the IDEA portfolio—it is now clearly sitting on Mr. Biddell's report, which the committee was told during estimates would be finished within weeks of the December holidays—in prolonging the agony and trying to cover up the whole mess.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We have no interest at all in doing the things the honourable members, in concert, suggest. Let me say that we are still in the process of cleaning up messes they created; I am happy to share it with them.

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer, who would know that when it comes to the purchase by the public sector of goods and services, a lot of that purchasing is of imported goods. The purchase of imported goods and services by the public sector represents at least \$5 billion a year and 150,000 jobs.

When the government was in opposition, it had a government procurement policy. As a matter of fact, it was a half-decent government procurement policy. Now that the Liberals have been in government for two years, could the Treasurer tell us where that government procurement policy is? What is it now?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We do procurement on the basis of a tendering process and we select the lowest tender in most cases or, if there is a good reason not to, an alternative.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Nickel Belt would like to ask a supplementary.

1440

Mr. Laughren: It is always difficult trying to nail the Treasurer, but I did not know it would be this difficult on government procurement.

The Treasurer should know that his Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil)

was in Ottawa last week at a convention dealing with government procurement, at which he said government procurement was essential in the whole cause of nation-building.

Aside from that rather grandiose goal, since there is a 10 per cent preferment for government purchasing for suppliers that are Canadian—not just Ontario; Canadian suppliers—I wonder whether the Treasurer can explain to us why it is that with 55,000 contractors who dealt with the Ontario government in the latest year for which we could get figures, in only 20 cases did the 10 per cent preferment apply. What in the world kind of government procurement policy is that given that there is so much at stake?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the honourable member, particularly since he has become Treasury critic, will find on more careful investigation that the process is more complex than just a flat 10 per cent. As a matter of fact, so-called foreign firms often have a very large establishment in Canada, in Ontario.

We have a fairly elaborate formula based on the amount of dollars committed in investment here, the number of people employed and the amount of research done that permits us on a basis of formula to establish what the allocation is to our own economy on the basis of a corporation or a manufacturing concern, no matter where its home base is. On that basis, we are able to weight the particular tenders on a basis that is for the best interest of the people who live in this province and work here and would like to have the benefit of the advantages.

I have more that I would like to say but I see that the honourable member has capitulated.

FARM TAX REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Reyecraft: I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture and Food about changes to the farm tax reduction program that were announced last week in the budget of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). I am aware of the fact that proposals were made to change the program five or six years ago and I know that considerable concern was expressed about those proposals. I would like to know how the current changes differ from those that were proposed, I believe in 1982.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The changes announced in the budget specifically address the concerns that were raised when the proposal was made, I believe back in 1982. The \$126 million we will spend on the program will compensate the farmers for the disproportionate amount of taxes they pay by virtue of their rather large land and building base.

We have made a number of changes. First and foremost, we consulted with the farmers through their organizations, such as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. We also consulted with municipal organizations, such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. With the previous administration, I have to say that consultation was a dictionary word only.

The farmers will pay their taxes on their land and their farm buildings. They will also pay their taxes on the farm home and the acre lot that the home sits on. But they are talking about value. What this government did was leave the farm home and the acre lot that the home sits on assessed at farm value. That is where the one major change came that the previous administration did not make.

LAYOFFS

Mr. Brandt: My question is for the Premier with respect to recent layoffs that have occurred in my riding. The Premier may be aware that Mueller Ltd., which has been located in Sarnia in a manufacturing facility for some 75 years, has indicated there is going to be a plant closing on November 30. This comes on the heels of many other layoffs in my community that I believe the Premier is aware of. This large number of layoffs is obviously causing a great deal of concern in my riding, which I am sure is shared by the member for Lambton (Mr. D. W. Smith), who sits on the other side of the House but has not raised this question, to my knowledge, with the Premier in the House or at any other time.

I would like to know what initiatives the Premier and his government have taken in the budget or in the throne speech that might help the laid-off workers, not only in Sarnia and Lambton but also in northern Ontario and in many other parts of this province, who are finding no help whatsoever from this government when they suffer from these kinds of layoffs.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the honourable member looks at the throne speech, the budget and the variety of initiatives that have been undertaken, I think he will see a very constructive approach to try to deal with some of these very difficult situations.

The member will know there is industrial restructuring going on, and on balance the picture is very positive. That is not, of course, a sufficient answer to those people who are laid off in specific situations; but we are finding that a lot of those people are being re-employed very quickly in a number of the communities. I cannot

make that statement universally, but in general cases, there is substantial pickup of those people who have been displaced because of closedowns.

That being said, we have a number of programs with respect to retraining of older workers, skills training programs and an industrial restructuring commissioner we hope to be able to talk about in the very near future, who we think will have a very positive impact and will take a positive view towards helping those people.

Mr. Brandt: I have to tell the Premier that the words he is offering to this House today offer very little in the way of hope to those laid-off workers.

Is his government prepared to offer incentives or some kind of inducements to communities that have been hard hit by way of layoffs, either in terms of moving a portion or a part of a ministry to a community in a circumstance such as I have described or by being prepared to assist in some kind of industrial expansion in some of those communities that require those new jobs to offset these kinds of layoffs? What we need is less rhetoric and a little more action.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I want to thank the honourable member very much for advice on this very specific approach to solving the problem. Let me tell the honourable member, I think this government has done more than any other government in the history of this province to address those particular problems. We have used government jobs. What he is standing up and saying, and has been saying for some time—as a matter of fact, it is a contribution he has made on more than one occasion—is that we should move government jobs to Sarnia. Why did the honourable member not move any there when he was in the cabinet and had some position of influence?

We have lots of communities with problems, across the province, and I understand that. We have moved into priority areas, particularly in northern Ontario, that are hard hit. I can tell the member that we are sensitive to the problems in various communities and I can assure him that I am prepared to work with him, the mayor or the community in any way to develop alternative strategies to deal with the problems, community by community.

I think the ministries have shown that sensitivity to addressing the specific problems. If the honourable member is asking me if we are going to move the Treasury to Sarnia tomorrow, the answer is no. But why did the honourable member not move the Ministry of the Environment to Sarnia when he had the opportunity, or

does he think clean drinking water is just a yuppie issue?

INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have sent a copy of a letter from a William Cox of St. Catharines to the Minister of Financial Institutions. Accompanying that letter is another from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., which it is sending to all of its policyholders. I want to ask him a question about that.

The letter from Metropolitan Life states that unless the policyholders contact Metropolitan Life and notify it otherwise—and usually they have only a two-week limit—the company will convert all the policyholders' dividends, which are in their name, to additional paid-up insurance policies. This means, of course, that many people who do not pay attention to the nonregistered form letter, or who are away, will have the conversion of their money to costly additional insurance they do not want.

Would the minister not agree that Metropolitan Life is using this unscrupulous and perhaps even illegal procedure to convert millions of dollars of policyholders' money into high-cost insurance for its own benefit? Can this giant insurance company, which is the second largest in the world, do as it likes with other people's money?

1450

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I want to thank the member for Welland-Thorold for the courtesy of sending me the letter. I have to admit I had not seen it before and I had not seen the problem before. From what I can tell, what they are doing is making an offer to convert the policy premiums into additional insurance, but they are using what is known as the negative option. The negative option is something that we have objected to in the past, and I will be happy to refer this to the superintendent of insurance and get back to the member with an answer.

Mr. Swart: The minister has obviously already noted that on page 2 of that letter they have this reverse option. Does he not think those two situations should be reversed so that if anybody wants his dividends converted to paid-up policies, he should have to sign for that? If the minister agrees, will he notify Metropolitan Life that no policyholder may have his dividends used to buy additional insurance unless he signs for it, and will he order that any conversions that have been made by Metropolitan Life without written authorization be reconverted to accessible dividends?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member's position is well taken, and I have undertaken to refer this to the superintendent of insurance to take whatever action is appropriate.

Mr. Cureatz: In the absence of the Premier, I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Financial Institutions. Is the minister aware that, since January of this year, I have had correspondence with his ministry and himself concerning the problem that senior citizens are having in getting insurance on their personal property while living in a senior residence?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: If I gathered his question, I think the member for Durham East wanted to know if I was aware that they were having a problem that he informed me of. Yes, I am aware of it.

Mr. Cureatz: As a supplementary, would the minister be so kind as to respond in this chamber, and at least to follow up in writing to me on my correspondence to him from May 1, when I posed the following question:

"Are you aware that insurance companies make a practice of imposing a surcharge on coverage of the effects of senior citizens living in residences and deny them their independence by tacking this coverage on the policies of the next of kin; and further, what measures do you propose to ensure that senior citizens living in residences have insurance at the same rates and under the same conditions as the public at large?"

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that a senior citizen living in a nursing home is not living under the same conditions as someone living in his own private home. The nursing home has access to strange people who come and go.

Mr. Cureatz: Senior citizens' residence.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Well, a senior citizens' residence is the same thing. It is a multi-residence facility where people come and go and are total strangers to the person involved. It is a very difficult situation. It is something that we have referred to the superintendent of insurance, and there are various options available.

One is to do what was suggested and have the family's home owner policy include the senior citizen's possessions. The institution itself, the senior citizens' residence, could extend its coverage to that person; all valuables could be put into a safety deposit box; things of that kind could be investigated.

It is a very difficult situation because it is not like every other household. It is a household that has people coming and going and it is very

difficult to maintain security. It is something that the superintendent is looking into. It is not a widespread problem, but I certainly appreciate that it is a problem and we are trying to come up with a resolution.

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Mr. Grande: My question is for the Minister of Education. It is in regard to the heritage languages program, Bill 80, or the new policy position of the Liberal Party on the teaching of nonofficial Canadian languages in our schools.

The minister's record on this issue right now is a series of broken promises and a lack of commitment. I want to remind him that in June 1986 he said that about the end of the summer he was going to have this new policy. Nothing happened. In February, he said that at the end of February he was going to have it. Nothing happened. The Premier promised publicly on television that by the end of March it was going to be done. Nothing happened. Again, by the end of April, nothing happened.

Can the minister tell us whether he has this new policy? Is he serious about bringing forth this new policy, or has he been mugged, as the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) has been mugged, on the way to the cabinet room?

Hon. Mr. Conway: In a quiet and dispassionate way, I want to tell my friend the member for Oakwood that the paper is prepared. In fact, it is at this very moment being translated. I expect to be releasing it within a very few days.

Mr. Grande: I really would like to believe the minister.

Mr. Speaker: Try another supplementary.

Mr. Grande: The only problem is that I had a note from the minister at the beginning of May. The minister said that possibly in two weeks it would be done, by May 25. We have passed May 25, and the minister is now telling me in two weeks again.

Since the minister already knows that the standing committee on social development is going to be dealing with Bill 80 for two weeks of public hearings, will he make sure that his statements, plus any of the research his ministry has done in regard to the western provinces—Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba—which have had these programs since 1971, will be coming forward to the standing committee on social development?

Hon. Mr. Conway: It seems to me that the member makes a reasonable request. I will make

every effort to accommodate it. I want him to know that this matter of heritage languages is something about which we feel very positively on this side, as I know my friend the member for Oakwood does.

Mr. Warner: It's a stall. It's beginning to sound like rent review.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to assure my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere that he need not be so excited this afternoon. He will have his opportunity for excitement, I expect, in the not-too-distant future. But I have to say to my friend the member for Oakwood that I will do everything I can—

Mr. McClellan: Rattle, rattle, rattle. Another chicken-hawk.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to be fair, on the near anniversary date, to say to my friends the member for Bellwoods and the member for Oakwood that I will do everything I can to meet the request. I want the honourable member to know the paper is ready. It is being prepared at this moment for some translation. It will be circulated as quickly as I can arrange.

I regret that it has taken a little longer than I had expected, but I want the honourable member to know our commitment is strong and we will make every effort to prepare the information for him immediately.

AIR AMBULANCE

Mr. Pollock: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), I will ask this question to the Treasurer. A 14-year-old boy had two fingers severed in an accident in the Bancroft area. The doctor requested an air ambulance to take the boy to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto to have those two fingers reattached. After approximately two hours of waiting for a response, the air ambulance official told the Bancroft officials the air ambulance would not be available. With an accident of this nature, time is of the essence. Why would it take two hours for the air ambulance people to give a response?

Mr. Speaker: I believe the member wanted to direct that to the government House leader, did he not?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: One of the ambulances was grounded because of weather, the other was in service; and I am delighted to know that the parents bundled the young man into their car, drove him to Sick Children's Hospital and the fingers were reattached successfully.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Martel: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Rules 29(a) and 88(d), one for oral questions and one for written questions, are pretty specific. In the case of written questions, ministers are supposed to give an interim response within 14 days and then indicate.

I would draw your attention to a question on February 3 and two questions earlier, three of them; and also to an oral question on May 6, 1987, when the minister said he would respond the next day. I am still waiting for the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) to respond the next day. Yesterday, he said he would have responses. Last week, on May 22, the minister said he would have responses to the questions I raised regarding Falconbridge. Mr. Speaker, I can take you right back to February 1986. I am still waiting for the minister. Maybe you can help obtain these answers for me.

1500

Mr. Speaker: If he would give me an opportunity, I would be glad to help the member. I appreciate his comments and request for assistance on two different matters. On the one matter pertaining to the written questions, I am certain that the government House leader has taken careful attention. As I said a day or two ago, it is not the responsibility of the Speaker to make a minister respond to a question.

PETITIONS

TRUCKING ROUTE

Mr. McLean: I have a petition as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Honourable Ed Fulton, Minister of Transportation and Communications, and the elected officers of the government of Ontario implement a study in Mara township in the county of Simcoe to devise an alternate route to Simcoe county road 47 which presently is being used as a main artery for transports hauling limestone from the quarry. This current route conveys the transports through the very centre of the village of Brechin and past an elementary school, thus producing great potential safety hazards and disruptions which are totally unnecessary when an alternative route is possible."

This petition is signed by 137 members of the village of Brechin.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTING

Ms. Gigantes: I have a petition signed by 37 residents of the Ottawa-Carleton and eastern

Ontario area in support of changes to the Public Accountancy Act to permit public accounting licences for certified general accountants with three years' public accounting experience in Ontario.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Barlow moved first reading of Bill 76, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Does the member have a brief explanation?

Mr. Barlow: Yes, I do have a brief explanation. This bill will require a secret ballot vote for certification of a trade union in all cases where the board is satisfied that at least 45 per cent of the employees in the bargaining unit are members of the trade union. It also provides that a strike vote or a vote to ratify a proposed collective agreement is also taken by secret ballot.

It is a bill identical to the one I introduced about a year ago. Since that time, I have received much encouragement to reintroduce it from both employers and employees.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable member for the explanation. We do not need a debate right now.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Conway moved second reading of Bill 55, An Act to amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act.

Mr. Speaker: Does the minister have any opening comments?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to just make some very brief comments on second reading and say, at the outset, that I very much appreciate the support of my friends the member for St. George (Ms. Fish) and the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen) in bringing this matter forward.

Bill 55 is an important matter because it amends the Teachers' Superannuation Act in one particular area, and that is to allow teachers with 35 years of experience, but who have not reached the age of 65, to retire without a penalty. The particular duration of this window is, as indicated in the bill, from May 31, 1987, through September 1, 1990.

Ms. Fish: We are pleased to concur in this bill, although we regret the government's decision not

to similarly bring forward legislation that would provide for the best five years' averaging to assist those who have retired and will retire in the near future.

Mr. Allen: I rise to indicate that our party supports this bill. Every piece of pension legislation designed in this fashion finds somebody one or two hours or one or two days on the other side of the window or the date one establishes. One is obviously sensitive to that fact, but the overriding concern of this bill not only meets with our support but also has the support of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, with whom negotiations were carried out over a period of time.

Some persons have asked about the three-year window. This is an attempt to deal in pretty much the same fashion as we did after the Bill 30 debate with those teachers for whom a window of three years was highly effective when they were 55 years of age with at least 10 years of experience.

The particular group in this question is teachers who came into the profession prior to the escalation of the academic requirements for the teaching profession. Many of them got into the profession in their 18th, 19th, or even 20th year and reached the age of 53, 54 or 55 and the 35-year limit to the benefits they can obtain from the pension plan and really are deserving of retirement.

Without wanting to give undue sanction to this particular reference, I can only reflect that Martin Luther suggested that any teacher who prevailed for 10 years in the profession was much to be admired. It is a demanding profession and I certainly wish all those who retire under this window all the best in their retirement years.

Mr. Harris: I want to join my colleague the member for St. George, the future member for St. George-St. David, in commenting briefly to say that we also are a little disappointed with the response of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the minister to the five-year averaging we have heard so much about in the last little while.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I thought it was your policy to exclude them.

Mr. Harris: I have never been Minister of Education or Treasurer, so the member should not accuse me—

An hon. member: Do we need a longer conversation on this? Is the Treasurer inviting a fuller exploration of this issue?

Mr. Speaker: The member for St. George is not in her seat. Interjections are out of order.

Mr. Harris: I join my colleague in expressing some concerns with that.

Also, I really would like to indicate, while the House leader and the minister are here, how apparently little grasp and ability they have to make this Legislature work on any problems that appear to be occurring.

I think it is fair and safe to say that this bill is an example of how ineffectual this government is. This is an important piece of legislation. It affects teachers who, in order to take advantage of this legislation, must make major career decisions and submit their resignations in writing before the end of May. It has now been introduced and rushed forward. We are told it has to have second reading today. "Please, everybody, could you hold your debate to 18 seconds?" It has to have third reading today, because the Lieutenant Governor cannot be here tomorrow. It is a ridiculous way to do business in this House.

This is not the only example. We see example after example of this government coming in with things at the last minute, presumably saying to interest groups and what not: "We wanted it. We wanted to break the rules of the House and whip it all through in one day without debate, but the opposition wanted to know a little about the bill. They wanted to talk about it a little. They wanted to have a little input. After all, the opposition are the majority in the Legislature, but why should we worry about them."

1510

This is another of those bills. We are supporting it and of course we are going to do everything we can to help bail the minister out of a problem he got himself into. Maybe he was too worried about a new office in his riding to be concerned about the teachers of the province or maybe he was concerned about something else, so that this piece of legislation sat on the back burner and then had to be brought forward and whipped through. Even then, I understand we are kind of lucky that we can sneak it in while the Lieutenant Governor is here today. Otherwise, this may not have been passed for teachers to make decisions.

The date today is May 27. Even now, the minister has given teachers who will be eligible for this program—presumably they will find out about it; if the federation mails it out today or tomorrow maybe they will find out about it before the end of May when they have to submit their letters. If they are here in the Legislature today—they probably are not here because it is in Orders and Notices for tomorrow.

Mr. Andrewes: They are here.

Mr. Harris: Are they?

Mr. Andrewes: Rest assured. We are lucky.

Mr. Harris: It is in Orders and Notices for tomorrow. Of course, as we now find out, tomorrow is too late because the Lieutenant Governor cannot be here tomorrow. I think it bears saying that this is not the way a minister, a House leader or a government should be bringing forward—

Ms. Caplan: You have known about it for months.

Mr. Andrewes: Who has? He has known about it for months? Been sitting on it, has he?

Mr. Harris: Oh, he has been sitting on it for months? Now maybe we are getting the reason. I was about to sit down.

Mr. Andrewes: The member for Oriole says he has known about it for months.

Mr. Harris: I could not understand how ineffectual the government was on this piece of legislation and on others, but now the member for Oriole has set the record straight. They wanted to hold teachers up to ransom, I guess. They wanted to keep them waiting on pins and needles. Maybe they would bring it in and maybe they would not. Maybe that is the reason.

I speak a little facetiously because I do not think that is the reason. I think it is total incompetence on the part of the government. We will do our part in trying to straighten it out and get second and third reading and royal assent today, but with a considerable amount of regret at the way the government has treated the teachers of the province and at the way it treats this Legislature.

Mr. Sterling: I would not normally participate in a debate on a bill such as this because it is rather succinct and to the point. I understand the House leaders have made some agreement in terms of trying to get speedy passage of the bill. When the House leaders meet and make a deal with regard to getting a bill through the House very quickly, that requires co-operation on the part of everybody in this Legislature. I do not want to delay this unduly, but I would like to cite this minister in terms of the co-operation he has given to this House and to the members of this Legislature in the past, and in the recent past with regard to education matters, particularly in the Ottawa-Carleton area.

Mr. Speaker: What section are you referring to?

Mr. Sterling: First, the minister in dealing with education matters in eastern Ontario, when asked questions by myself chose to cast aspersions upon this member without answering the particular questions. I was happy to receive recently a letter from the president of the Catholic parents association to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) that chastised the minister for making these particular aspersions rather than answering the question.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the member. I wonder whether the member can help me in understanding how these comments tie in with the Teachers' Superannuation Amendment Act?

Mr. Sterling: It is my understanding that when we deal with a matter in this Legislature, the Teachers' Superannuation Act, we are dealing with a number of matters dealing with our education system and that part of the legislative process—

Mr. Speaker: Has the honourable member looked at the legislation?

Mr. Sterling: I have the bill in front of me; thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It does not deal with a number of matters.

Mr. Sterling: With regard to the Teachers' Superannuation Act, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that as a member of the Legislature you have received many letters from various constituents who are retired teachers and who have been seeking redress for very low pensions that they have been receiving from this government.

I was happy to see that under the pressure of the teachers' superannuation organization and of many of the members on this side of the floor, especially the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis), the Treasurer did move one small bit in readdressing that situation and giving some of our more elderly retired teachers a boost in their pensions. I welcome that. I hope he will address it again in the very near future. However, he could also have addressed another inequity, as put forward by the member for Scarborough Centre, and that is calculating their pension on the basis of the best five years.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If that is an inequity, it was established by the Tory government.

Mr. Sterling: Mr. Speaker, perhaps you could restrain the Treasurer. I am having difficulty addressing myself to this bill. I know you want me to keep relevant and therefore I am trying to keep relevant, but he keeps interrupting me.

I was saying that if the Treasurer had seen fit to give the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) adequate funding in the budget—not only for this but also for other matters like the funding of new capital construction in eastern Ontario where we got only 13 per cent to 15 per cent of our request, whereas around the Toronto area he managed to give somewhere around 47 per cent to 98 per cent of the requests—we would see fit to pass this bill in a much more congenial manner.

I want to say in concluding my remarks that this legislation is in tune with what I believe my party stands for in terms of trying to get young teachers into the teaching profession and giving those who have served for 35 years the opportunity to retire and retain their sanity, as well as providing for our younger people the opportunity to get into the teaching profession.

Last, I want to suggest to the minister, if he brings legislation forward in the future, that he mention to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) that when he goes to eastern Ontario and announces the capital funding for large institutions like Algonquin College, for a tourism and hospitality school which he did yesterday or the day before, that he have the courtesy to invite the local MPPs to such announcements. I only hope that when they are going to announce the additions or the capital funding for the University of Ottawa, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) will take the opportunity to do that—

Mr. Speaker: The member may be straying just a little right now.

Mr. Sterling: He will do that at the time he is receiving a doctorate from that university. I wonder if Mr. Roy will be at that particular event.

In tune with our avowed co-operation, I will conclude my remarks and indicate my support for this piece of legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

1520

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Conway moved third reading of Bill 55, An Act to Amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act.

Mr. McClellan: Very briefly, it is necessary to point out that the House is giving unanimous consent to waive the provision of the standing orders that prevents bills from passing more than one stage in one afternoon because of the

importance of this bill, and as my colleague the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) said, because of the fact that delays in bringing in the bill meant a major inconvenience to a number of teachers who are faced with an end-of-May deadline to qualify for the retirement provisions of the bill. Because of our longstanding traditions of being co-operative, we are pleased to accommodate the government and help to bail it out of the embarrassment it is in here this afternoon.

Mr. Harris: The member for St. George had a previous engagement and actually did not know the bills were coming forward today. She was able to stay for second reading. I know she would want to be here for third reading but is unable to be here. I am explaining in that way her absence as our critic.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, His Honour is waiting to give Royal Assent and has expressed a desire to do so in the chamber. If the members would attend, we will ask him to come in.

The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took his seat upon the throne.

ROYAL ASSENT

Hon. Mr. Alexander: Pray be seated.

Mr. Speaker: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present sittings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Assistant Clerk: The following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

Bill 55, An Act to amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983;

Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act;

Bill 177, An Act to amend the Health Facilities Special Orders Act, 1983.

Clerk of the House: In Her Majesty's name, the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these bills.

The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to retire from the chamber.

INTERIM SUPPLY (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for interim supply for the period commencing June 1, 1987, and ending June 30, 1987.

Mr. Harris: We are pleased to support this resolution.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I appreciate the co-operation of all members, which is better some times than others. On this occasion, the House has authorized the expenditure of between \$7 billion and \$9 billion—I can tell the members exactly if I burrow into my desk—most of which has already been spent.

It may be that we should amend the provisions of interim supply and make it read, let us say, November 1 or something like that, but I am not going to press my luck at this time. However, notice of interim supply that will be necessary by the end of June will be in Orders and Notices in the near future. I am very glad that this one is about to carry.

Motion agreed to.

1530

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I hear this is an especially good act.

Mr. Davis: The Treasurer might enjoy it.

Many years ago, a young man stood before a crowd of men, women and children and in a dynamic and outstanding address gave those individuals hope, a cause, a sense of purpose with the famous words, "I have a dream." We know that dream. What we found is a man of vision, a person with foresight, an individual possessing qualities of courage and conviction, a man who believed in a purpose and was prepared to travel the unknown paths of tomorrow because he had a dream and he had a vision.

I recall the former Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson, who had a vision of giving Canada a sense of identity, and he did it with the debates and the final crowning of our own flag. He risked to make it a reality. I reflect upon the honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who also had a dream, a cause, to bring home to Canada its own Constitution.

Two years ago, this government moved into a position of power through new initiatives in Ontario politics. From its birth, there was a sense of newness. The Premier (Mr. Peterson) captured the moment of time by indicating that his leadership and his government policies would be future-oriented, a government for the 1980s, a government for tomorrow.

This budget demonstrates that this Liberal government has failed miserably to provide Ontarians with a vision for tomorrow. It is a bland, static budget and it reveals very few initiatives to deal with the pressing problems of youth unemployment, the housing crisis we face in our ridings, our educational problems.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Can you not be more Christian?

Mr. Davis: I am trying.

The Premier and his colleagues have refused to follow in the footsteps of previous federal leaders, who were willing to take the risks, who were prepared to challenge people to think of tomorrow through future-oriented programs and policies. This government—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Yes, but our deficit is over \$3 billion.

Mr. Davis: We are going to get to that. We are going to talk about the Treasurer's deficit.

This government has no vision for tomorrow. Nowhere do we see in this budget a glimpse of strategies to be developed which would enable Ontarians to come to terms with a technological and service and information society, which is now on the horizon and dawning upon us and moving very quickly; no dreams, no visions, no innovations for community health programs; no stimulus and no challenge to our seniors to exercise their talents and their gifts to become more involved in this new age; no imaginative programs to stimulate small businesses, the heart of Ontario's economy; nothing to challenge the economic markets of tomorrow. The budget is void of vision for the development of research opportunities. There are no bold initiatives in education to challenge our young people and to prepare them for tomorrow.

This document will not prepare Ontarians for the year 2001. Alas, the problems we face as a province today—unemployment; 150,000 young people in this province without jobs; the chronic disrepair of many of our educational institutions; inadequate educational funding on all levels; the continuing high costs of health care; the desperate lack of day care facilities for young parents; society's need to address new illnesses, such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome and Alzheimer's disease; the lack of innovation in transportation—these concerns of today, the concerns of the people in Scarborough Centre, will, because of this bland, do-nothing budget, remain the concerns of the community in the province's tomorrow. Where is the boldness?

Mr. Ferraro: Did you say baldness?

Mr. Davis: No, I did not. I said boldness. Where are the visions and the dreams of this bankrupt government? One certainly would believe that, after 42 years, my honoured colleagues sitting on this side of the House and seeing those same problems day after day, month after month, year after year, would at least have had some kinds of strategies, policies and innovative ideas to offer the people of Ontario. One can only concur with my socialistic colleagues to my left that, without the accord, without those innovations and those directions, this government would be floundering on a sea of change, rudderless.

Let us examine the record of this government. Since coming to power in 1985, this government has increased spending by \$8 billion. Since assuming the mantle of government, the Liberals have increased personal income tax by four per cent, have placed a surcharge on all income over \$50,000, have increased the alcohol tax levy, have increased the tobacco tax levy, have increased the corporate taxes, have increased the tax on gasoline to the tune of one half a million dollars a day that flows into the Treasurer's pockets and have increased the land transfer tax. In fact, this government has taken from the pockets of the average Ontarian more than \$900 million over last year.

The record falls far short of demonstrating fiscal responsibility. Despite our economic buoyancy, our record level of revenue growth, the public debt is still at 17.7 per cent of the gross provincial product. The cost of servicing this debt is \$3.8 billion, more money than the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) expends, totally, for financing all the programs of Community and Social Services in this province. Little wonder this government has refused to pass through the \$150 to the 13,000 disabled in this province. I am led to believe that by this amount of \$4,300 for every man, woman and child, we are mortgaging our children's future.

The budget shows this government has increased spending by some 30 per cent since taking office. In the three budgets brought down by this Treasurer, we find an average increase in government spending of approximately 10 per cent, while inflation is running at just about four per cent. The civil service has grown by 4,600 people in the last year, at a cost of over \$200 million.

This budget contains no allocation for pay equity in the public service, conservatively estimated by the government's own officials at around \$88 million. There are no allocations for

the new fee structures of doctors, expected to be lucrative in the face of an upcoming election.

Mr. Wildman: No, the doctors will give up.

Mr. Davis: My colleagues to my left should watch. They will see the Treasurer continue to flow money out faster than he makes it. There is no indication of the new costs of the dental care program recently announced. Therefore, what we see is that the government's spending is growing faster than the economy and this budget faster than the provincial revenues the Treasurer is collecting. We are witnessing the resurrection of the Trudeau years: free-wheeling spending and high deficits by this government.

Mr. Wildman: I thought your leader wanted that. Your leader was quoting Trudeau today.

Mr. Davis: There is nothing wrong with quoting a great statesman once in a while. You do not have to agree with the individual's ideology or policies all the time. Why, heavenly day, there are even times we agree with some of the innovations and the initiatives and policies of the New Democratic Party, let alone the Liberals.

Our Treasurer has created what I want to call "Nixon economics," which I believe every family in Scarborough Centre would love to practise in its daily budgeting. Our Treasurer indicates that his government will have revenues of some \$33 billion, but we will expend some \$34 billion. This Liberal government is going to spend \$1 billion more than it is going to take in. If only we could run our household on this type of budgeting policy that the Treasurer has initiated in Ontario and spend more than we have. Does this demonstrate fiscal responsibility? I think not. These are the actions of a government that has lost control. It is irresponsible fiscal policy.

1540

Mr. Ferraro: We didn't lose 15 members.

Mr. Davis: Let us look at that for a moment, 15 members. I believe that in the last election the papers were decrying the flow of Liberal elected members who were flying off to Ottawa. I did not hear any concern, or the Liberals saying how important it was that they were losing those members. All of a sudden, because some members on the Progressive Conservative side have decided, for their own reasons, to retire, people would like to paint the picture that we are falling apart. We are not. We are not falling apart. We have excellent candidates coming aboard.

Mr. Pollock: We are going to take Lambton this time.

Mr. Davis: That is right. Lambton is one we have earmarked. The member for Lambton (Mr. D. W. Smith) ought to be careful because I think that is one we are going to take; and the member for Chatham-Kent (Mr. Bossy) needs to be careful because that is another one I think is ripe for the harvesting.

Mr. Ferraro: Cindy Nicholas feels the same way.

Mr. Davis: I will continue to place before the people of Scarborough Centre my record as a political activist, as a person who has been involved in my community for 14 years, and I will let the people of Scarborough Centre make the decision who should represent them in this House; and they will.

Mr. Wildman: Are they all forgiving people?

Mr. Davis: Oh, they are.

As I was attempting to say, this is an irresponsible fiscal policy followed by this government. It shows complete disregard for reality or respect for the people of Ontario. This budget shows that this government's course of action is to spend, spend, spend. It is ironic that the Treasurer at one point stood up and said he would not buy votes, buy votes, buy votes; but that is exactly what this budget is intended to do. "Let the people of tomorrow's generation pay for our good times." That is what the Treasurer is saying.

Interjection.

Mr. Davis: Look who has arrived: my friend the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine). The flying ex-cabinet minister has arrived, my heavenly day.

It is a wonder he can go to Cochrane North and talk about the cost of gasoline when his Premier had promised he would rebate that and this government, under this Treasurer, went ahead and increased the cost of gasoline to the north to the tune of a half a million dollars a day flowing into the coffers of the Treasury. So much for the concern and the compassion that this government has for the people of northern Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: United Church preachers don't go more than 15 minutes, you know. They would lose their jobs.

Mr. Davis: I would like to review the deficit of this province for a moment. Our Treasurer boldly stated to the press and to the people of Ontario that this budget would reduce the deficit below \$1 billion with a reduction of some \$350 million, and there was a chorus of applause from the other side. But wait. Let us examine that \$350 million. What we see is that it will only occur if

the Treasurer can reduce some of the ministries' budgets by the \$350 million. Otherwise, the deficit remains the same at \$1.3 billion or perhaps escalates.

What areas of programs will the Treasurer cut? Will he cut the agricultural programs of the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) to find the \$350 million? Perhaps he will cut back on the hospital extension and capital that is still owing from last year's budget. Perhaps he will look at education. He can always find money in education. He has been very scrumpy in affording the kinds of finances needed there. Maybe he will cut that; or the environment.

How about the disabled? That is an easy place to find money. They have difficulty articulating their concerns and their needs to this government. In fact, they came down to talk to the Premier and some of his cabinet colleagues who would not even meet with them.

Mr. D. W. Smith: What about all the grants to Scarborough Centre?

Mr. Davis: I see the member for Lambton would like to ask a question about the grants for Scarborough Centre.

I would point out that in the past the government of Ontario has looked to Scarborough Centre and helped it deal with its seniors with a number of senior homes. Certainly in the future, the government would never want to be accused of looking after only those areas in this province that are painted a certain colour.

Interjection.

Mr. Davis: Red? Of course not. The member would certainly want to be known as the member for Lambton who was concerned with ensuring that there was funding for all the people of Ontario. We may just get to look at where the grants have been going lately. According to the figures of the Treasurer, the total provincial debt is some \$37 billion, up \$4 billion in the two years since this group has been in power; and this government claims to be exercising fiscal responsibility.

The Treasurer rose proudly last week and said, "No increases in taxes," and the people in Ontario went wild. "No increases." This budget does absolutely nothing to alleviate the heavy tax burden that this Treasurer has placed on the backs of the average person in Ontario in the last two years. Certainly there were no cuts in the taxes. He did not have to have any increases in taxes because he had already taxed people to death, so before the election he was going to smooth them over. "I am not going to increase the tax base." He had already done it to a tune of \$900 million.

By the way, we will continue to pay those taxes this year.

Why were there no tax cuts? It seems to me that with the kind of buoyant economy and the tremendous kind of income the Treasurer has inherited, at the very least he could have cut personal income tax by 10 per cent. The Treasurer and this government have mortgaged the future of our children and our grandchildren and they will strangle the generations of tomorrow with the increasing debt of this province.

I would like to turn our attention for a few moments to the government's top-priority commitment—education. In the throne speech, we heard and found that education is at the core of this government's policy, initiatives and programs. The Premier talks about excellence in education. In the throne speech, he talks about a curriculum and an experience that are relevant and meaningful to students. The Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) talks about providing young people with skills needed for lifetime learning. The government promises a day care facility in each new school that will be built. The Premier has said, "An investment in our schools is an investment in the future of our communities."

Let us examine the Liberal record in education. When the Liberals came to power, the provincial share of the educational budget—and I know the honourable minister will agree—was 48.6 per cent. Now, after three budgets—not one, not two, but three budgets—the provincial share is 44 per cent, a drop of four per cent. I call it the "minus four per cent solution" of the Liberals to deal with education.

1550

What this government has done is increase the property owners' contributions to education in this province. I would point out to the Treasurer that even during the recession the previous Progressive Conservative government's contributions to educational funding never dropped below 50 per cent until 1982. Let members check their records. What we found was it took the previous government a time frame of six years to lower that four per cent. This government has accomplished a four per cent reduction in the provincial share of education in this province in less than two years.

The government wishes to confuse the reality of educational funding by constantly referring to capital costs and capital grants and how much more it has done there. What is interesting to note is that the comparison the Treasurer uses is to 1984-85 allocations. But when we compare this

budget to last year's budget, we see an increase to capital grants of only \$13 million, which is the cost of one high school.

This flies in the face of realities, especially when we realize there are nine growth areas: the Metropolitan Separate School Board, the Scarborough Board of Education, the North York Board of Education, the Halton Board of Education, the Halton Roman Catholic Separate School Board, the Durham Board of Education, the Durham Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board, the Peel Board of Education and the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

These boards' capital needs are projected at between \$360 million and \$720 million annually. What we find in the school board requests in 1985-86 is a request for \$398 million. This Liberal government, which likes to portray itself as being generous in education, provided \$127 million, a shortfall of \$271 million.

Last year there was a request for \$504 million. The government gave \$147 million, a shortfall of \$357 million. This year, the boards of education in this province asked for \$1 billion and the government gave them \$147 million, a shortfall of some \$800 million.

It is interesting. If the Liberals had maintained the provincial share of funding that they inherited when they walked across the floor to govern a year ago, they would have found an additional \$250 million in their budget for capital costs. The government has provided an additional \$226 million in capital which will flow through in 1988-89, but that is not enough. It is too little, too late. There are still 150,000 students in this province who receive, if not all a large majority of their education in portables.

I can recall that the present Minister of Education, in one of his famous speeches asking for the resignation of the previous minister, indicated that one of the rationales for that was that the government had failed to address the needs of children in portables. Since this minister has taken office we have seen the number of portables increase.

The money allocated, the \$226 million, would build—are members ready for this?—15 high schools across this province, if all the money went to building high schools. However, if the government decided to put all the money into elementary schools, it would build approximately 40 elementary schools.

What we do know is that the York boards, York Region Board of Education and the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board,

require two high schools per year, 10 elementary schools and capital funding of \$40 million to \$80 million a year. This budget does not seriously address the educational needs of this province with respect to capital funding.

The Minister of Education, the Premier and the Treasurer talk about lifelong education experience—a great goal, an excellent philosophical statement. But what is reality? This government that philosophizes on lifelong education has refused to recognize as a legitimate use of space adult day classes in this province.

In fact, I had the honour and the privilege of opening the new school in Scarborough for adult education when it began. The enrolment next year will be over 1,100 students. What indeed I saw from an innovative board is the educational school of tomorrow, the retraining and the re-educating of the adults of our province, with no thanks to this Treasurer or this minister.

I am glad to see the minister respond to an initiative that I have championed for several years, to provide day care settings in the schools of the province, especially in those schools that have declining enrolments. The minister went one step further. He announced in this House that every new school that will be built will have space for day care facilities. For that, I applaud him. That is an initiative that needs to be done in this province.

But what is the record? School boards have been informed that the existing day care programs that are now operating will not be recognized as legitimate uses of space. For the ministry's purpose, this space will be classified as empty. How can they claim on one hand that they are going to build and provide day care in new schools, and on the other close day care now operating in the older schools?

I would like the Minister of Education to tell the people of the Victoria county school area that they will have day care facilities built in their two new schools. I have yet to be informed that they are going to have day care facilities, but it is a new school. Or are the parents in Victoria county to be treated as equally, with the same kind of opportunity, as the people in the city of Toronto or Scarborough? Is that going to be—the minister's favourite phase—"a local option"?

Where in this budget do we find the additional funds for the purchase of computers? If we accept the Premier's statements that we must ensure students are trained in the new literacy—as he informed the Scarborough Mirror on Monday, where he is quoted—where is the funding for word processors for young students interested in

business and office careers? Where is the funding from the Treasurer for the purchase of modern equipment like computerized lathes and machine shops to ensure our young people receive proper training with skills for the job market?

I assure the Treasurer that he has informed us in the capital accounts. He says, "Look to the capital account." What do we find in that area? A paltry \$46 million. Let us look at the \$46 million. I ask the educators, parents and students to examine the record of the Liberal government.

The government has indicated that science is of primary importance in its educational policy. The boards of education across this province have requested \$72 million to upgrade their science rooms. The government's total commitment for upgrading facilities and equipment in this province this year will be \$46 million. No money is budgeted in the Treasurer's report for new science books, which I have been told will cost an estimated \$121 million.

If my understanding is correct, in Victoria county, where two new schools are to be built, they will not have a modern science classroom. That just reinforces the philosophy that the Treasurer stated during the debates on educational funding several months ago, that students outside of Metro cannot expect the same quality of education which he called, "these many innovative programs that are frivolous."

1600

I ask the Treasurer and the Minister of Education, should not the students of Victoria county have access to a music program? Should they not have access to the family studies room, machine shops, wood shops and metal shops that the children of Scarborough have? Or are they second-class citizens?

I want to talk about school drop-outs. I mean, I really want to talk about school drop-outs. This minister took two years to address an issue and so he assigned a one-man task force to go across the province and investigate school drop-outs. If the minister had wanted to find out about school drop-outs, he could have joined the Progressive Conservative task force that went across this province last fall and summer and he would have had enough data to deal with the school drop-out issue. There is no educator on that task force. There is no student. There is no parent. It is a one-man task force and the objective of this government is to eliminate the school drop-out rate by one third over five years.

It is noted that in an ordinary class of 100 students beginning grade 9, 40 of those students will not complete their secondary school educa-

tion. The sad thing is the majority of those young people are capable of post-secondary education. This government says, "We are going to reduce it by one third over five years." What is one third of 40? Approximately 13 students are somehow going to be funnelled back into the system at the end of five years. That is two students a year—shame—two of the 40 students a year in any given group of 100. Two students out of the 40 will find the opportunity to continue their education. I suggest the goal should be zero.

In 1985, the Premier campaigned across this province on a provincial share of 60 per cent funding. Did this budget move significantly in that direction? No. Last month, the Minister of Education, in recognition of the problem between the per pupil grant for elementary and for secondary, froze the difference at \$911 and then spoke volumes about how much he recognized that concern and that problem. Did this budget make a significant move to reduce that shortfall? No. Did we see any bold initiatives on the part of the Liberal government in educational financing? No. Did we perceive this government moving to eliminate the educational tax burden on the property owner, understanding that it is sitting on the Macdonald report? No.

The rhetoric that we are exposed to by this government is deafening. It continually states that there must be more resources for elementary students in response to the blueprint for justice and that it must address the drop-out rate. Yet, faced with a golden opportunity to put words into actions, faced with a prospect of really doing something in elementary and secondary education for students and teachers of this province, what do we see and what do we hear? Nothing.

The Premier talks of a first-class educational system and he points out that Ontario has to be in the forefront in technology. He especially takes great pride in the technological fund, \$100 million a year for the development of a technological program; \$1 billion in 10 years. I ask my colleague, the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini), would it not be more practical to take that \$100 million and buy computers, to ensure that the young people in elementary grades and secondary schools all have computers?

If we are really talking about providing a base foundation of technology for Ontario, we begin that in the classroom; and we begin it by providing computers and word processors and providing the type of equipment that young people need in their shops to prepare them for the work force.

This budget demonstrates that, contrary to the Liberal government policies, education is not a priority. They are words of puffery. They are illusionary. What we find are promises that are counterfeit. True, an investment in our schools is an investment in the future of our province, our community and our country. This government, through this budget, has abdicated its promises of investing in the education of young students and preparing them for tomorrow and the new age.

I am sadly disappointed. I would like to try and envision what happened to the Minister of Education as he walked into the dark hallway to meet the Treasurer. Did he go down on bended knee and ask and beg for more money; or was he cuffed about the ears and battered into the corner; told, "Go away, young man, go away"? Maybe he was told to go west. Who knows?

I sat here and I believed that this Minister of Education and this Treasurer were committed to education. I was looking forward to something that was revolutionary, dynamic. I was looking for something which said—even in my wildest dreams I expected him to go from 44 per cent to 48 per cent; but no, he did not go that way. I expected him at least to have said, "I am going to begin to address and reduce the gap between the elementary student and the student in the secondary school." No. I find it appalling that this government did not take the initiative to move dramatically into education. What happened is that the people in the family of education will no longer place trust in the words of this government.

I would like to move for a moment to seniors. I had at least expected the Treasurer to bring about some innovative mechanisms in addressing the needs of seniors in Ontario. What do we see? He made a very innovative movement. He said: "I am going to increase the tax grant by giving you \$600 to write off your income tax instead of \$500. I am going to give you an additional \$100."

We applaud that move, but let us look at it. What we really find is that the education tax bill of the seniors in Scarborough Centre went up \$40 this year, because of this government; because this government refused to move on the 60 per cent level of funding. We are going to give them \$100 and take back \$40. They got \$60.

If this government really wanted to provide the seniors with a tax rebate that represents the true \$500 granted to them in 1980 by the previous government, then that tax rebate should have been \$750.

I cannot let it go by without talking about the disabled. I find it appalling that any government, any politician, would pre-empt a federal increase in their pensions to the disabled persons of this province. It is a disgraceful type of action on the part of the Treasurer and the minister. We see a definite lack of compassion and concern on the part of this government.

1610

The federal government indicated it wished to increase the benefits of the disabled by \$150 per month. The federal minister indicated that he wished the provinces to flow that money through, that it was not to be counted as income, so that the guaranteed annual income system would still apply. But this Liberal government, this Premier, this Treasurer and the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) said: "No, we will do it our way. We will give them \$50 and use the other \$100 for other disabled people."

The Minister of Community and Social Services defends this by saying it was only fair and just that the government should increase the benefits of other disabled people in response to the federal government initiatives. Who could argue with that kind of decision-making, that kind of rationale? But let us examine what in fact they did. They gave \$50 to the disabled. I wish the members to know that works out to \$1.66 per day, whereas if the total fund from the federal government had flowed through, the people would have received \$5 a day.

The minister stands up and defends it by saying he had no choice. I want this assembly to know that this minister indeed did have a choice. He could have funded the other disabled people to the tune of \$150 a month. It probably works out to somewhere around \$126 million to \$130 million in additional income to the disabled. But no, this crass government took \$100 away from those physically disabled persons. Shame.

I would like to say a few words about free trade. Perhaps there is no more important issue to face our province than the impact of free trade. The Treasurer saw fit to address this important issue that affects every Ontarian in just two brief paragraphs. Again, we see the bankruptcy of this government for leadership in creative thoughts and planning for the future. Any student of economics realizes and recognizes that in bilateral trade negotiations there will be an impact upon the economy of Ontario and on our industrial sector. One would concur that Ontario will benefit from this agreement. However, there will be some sectors of our economy in which there

will be some type of unemployment, something that is dysfunctional. We will find that in some areas people will find employment is in jeopardy.

Surely the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) is well aware of the industries and service areas that could be placed in jeopardy. Most certainly, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology would have a most strong advocate to have incorporated in this budget funding to prepare for the impact of free trade expected for those men and women in this province. We find no direction and no initiatives in this government dealing with the retraining program for those who will be requiring employment change. Nor do we find this government meeting with our industry and labour leaders to plan for tomorrow when a bilateral trade agreement is approved. This government is developing no strategies to enable Ontario to adjust to free trade.

This government has failed in responding to those important issues. The Premier has not demonstrated a dynamic, futuristic leadership in this area of Ontario's future.

I would like to talk for a few moments about skills training. The Liberal government claims that its Futures program has been highly successful. It was introduced in 1985 to assist 230,000 young people by the end of 1986. It is now May 1987 and they say that their program has helped only 50,000 young persons. The reality of the situation is that there are 150,000 young Ontarians who are currently unemployed and this Liberal government and its policies have done nothing to help them.

In this budget, one would have expected a proposal for tomorrow, the beginning of a campaign to deal with 150,000 young people who are unemployed—instead of contributing to the high unemployment among youth today—by establishing creative apprenticeship programs, retraining programs and initiating incentives for small business that encourage employment opportunities for these young people.

This budget and this government lack direction and policy. This Liberal government cancelled the former Progressive Conservative government's program to help retrain older laid-off workers. Now the Liberals see the program had merit. They recognize the initiative and the futuristic planning of the previous government and now they are going to reintroduce the program. I am deeply distressed that this government and this Premier, who love to toss around phrases like "first-class," have failed the young unemployed youth of Ontario. They have

offered no hope. They have offered no jobs for tomorrow.

There is another issue of great concern to the people of Ontario; that is, the Ontario housing crisis that we now find ourselves in. Each year, 17,000 new housing units are required but only half of those are currently being met. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) assured the people of Ontario who were seeking accommodation, especially affordable accommodation, that his rent review bill would result in new construction and new places to live. That simply is not true.

It is a fact that eight Canadian cities have a vacancy rate of less than one per cent and seven of those cities are in Ontario: Hamilton, Kitchener, London, Oshawa, St. Catharines, Windsor and Metropolitan Toronto. It is easier to find a place to live in New York City where there is a vacancy rate of 2.5 per cent than to find accommodation in the seven cities I have indicated. What Bill 51 accomplishes is higher rents; 10 per cent, 15 per cent and in some cases we have heard 30 per cent.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Why did you vote for it?

Mr. Davis: I find it interesting that the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) decides to enter the debate. He wants to know why I voted for Bill 51.

What is interesting is that the rent review package was placed in the accord for the Liberals to look at rent review. What was very interesting when we began the debate was that the tenants came forward and had an agreement with the landlords that this was the kind of package they would like to look at. What happened was that all of a sudden the members of the New Democratic Party began to realize that they were losing a focus, that they could no longer go out and drum up votes by saying, "You are paying too high a price." When they looked at the building-operating-cost index/residential-complex-cost index formula, they found out, as was pointed out to the member for Windsor-Riverside by my colleagues on several occasions, that we were going to see higher rent increases.

One of the promises the NDP wanted in that bill was this type of board of management that would give tenants some teeth to bring about the repairs they needed in their apartment buildings. We concurred. That was good. What has happened is that the Housing minister has now pulled the teeth of that particular committee which he is now creating. I find it interesting that the NDP, which initiated the process and which had no problem with the BOCI-RCCI formula

when we began, all of a sudden backed off and is back talking about four per cent for rent increases in this province.

Ms. Gigantes: What is he talking about? That is scurrilous slander.

Mr. Davis: The member should read the records.

The government's Renterprise program was announced in December 1985 to build 5,000 units, less than one third of the annual construction requirement. It has built 200 units.

1620

My leader, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman), and our Housing critic attempted to address the concern of affordable housing by introducing a motion to provide rent supplements to all individuals in Ontario who were paying 30 per cent of their income for housing. It was at least a step to attempt to address a social need, to help those people own their own homes or to have accommodation. But the Liberal government in concert with its New Democratic Party friends voted that proposal down. We note that the rent supplements for the needy are assisting only 11,000 families and we have a waiting list of 23,000 at Ontario Housing. There are 40,000 people in this province waiting for accommodation of some type.

One of the most frustrating aspects of being an elected member is dealing with people who come to ask for assistance in finding housing when there is no room in the inn because this government has not initiated the kind of action we expected from it to create affordable housing. We do know that the increase in administrative spending of the Housing minister, which is going to be used for new staffing, is sufficient to construct 200 new rental units.

Just for a few brief moments, I would like to talk about health. We would have expected some initiative and definite planning for tomorrow from the Liberal government; new, creative ideas. We find no new money in this budget for community-based health care services. We find no money for paramedics and no money for mental health. Instead, the Liberals simply repeat the belief that there are two studies going on and that when those studies are concluded, they will then develop a health care program for the people of this province. One would have expected something better from this government.

Child care: One looks at the budget and concurs with those who are desperately seeking child care in this province. They ask: "Where is the government's initiative? Where is its overall strategy and plan that we were promised?" A

comprehensive new policy on child care was to revolutionize this province, their minister stated. The child care initiative has been called a betrayal by Susan Colley and we continue to be faced with this problem. What we need is a government that will begin to address seriously that whole child care problem in our province. One wonders if we can trust the word of the Premier. The Minister of Community and Social Services stated that the province needs 100,000 new spaces and this budget will provide for some 5,000.

I would like to say just a few words about transportation. The Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) was given \$130 million for Metro Toronto. Of that, \$50 million will be gobbled up, to begin with, for the extension of Highway 407 that my colleague the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) was able to promote and finally get this government to move on. What is interesting is that there is no funding for the subway to come across Sheppard through Scarborough and North York. It seems to me that one of the crises our province is facing is the amount of vehicles moving into the downtown core and the moving of people efficiently and quickly from one centre in this province to another. I would have expected a much more innovative program to come from the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

Then I look at the environment. I want to draw to the attention of the House and especially to the attention of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) the concern of my constituents about the Scarborough Bluffs. When is this government going to provide a five-year, comprehensive program to address the erosion problem that the residents face on Fishleigh and other streets along the banks of the Scarborough Bluffs? That would at least have been an initiative on behalf of this government. This government needs to do much more in the area of the environment.

I tried very quickly to do a summary of some of the areas of concern that I and the people of Scarborough Centre have about this budget. I expected this budget to be much more innovative, daring and creative. I find it disappointing and, along with my leader, say that this government could have done better.

Mr. Wildman: Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time for me to join in a debate since the new session began, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your elevation to your position and on the way you conduct the business of this House.

I listened carefully to the intervention of my colleague the member for Scarborough Centre and noted that he said he had tried to deal quickly with the issues raised by the budget presented in this House recently by the Treasurer. I will try to be a little quicker than my colleague in dealing with the issues.

I was particularly interested in listening to the comments of the member for Scarborough Centre because in my view this budget presented by the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon) is indeed a conservative budget. It is a budget that any of the Conservative Treasurers who have served in this House since I first was elected in 1975 could have introduced.

This is the kind of budget that could have been introduced by Darcy McKeough, perhaps even by the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) and certainly by the member of the Legislature who now leads the official opposition. I say that because in my view this is basically a stand-pat budget. It is a steady-as-she-goes, maintain-the-status-quo budget. It is not an attempt to actually take advantage of the tremendous windfall that has accrued to the provincial Treasury as a result of the boom in the economy in southern Ontario, particularly in the Golden Horseshoe.

I suppose that I should be pleased with this budget because the government has chosen not to increase taxes, not even the so-called sin taxes that it is almost traditional that Treasurers increase whenever they have the opportunity. I am sure many people in the province are happy that there is no provincial tax increase at this time. Nobody likes to pay taxes, least of all myself. But I must admit that I was unaware of the people of the province jumping for joy and raving about this budget, as was indicated by the member for Scarborough Centre. Even though there were no tax increases and there may have been a sense of relief on the part of the electorate and on the part of the taxpayers, I did not experience any great joy myself and neither did my constituents or the people I talked to on hearing about this budget.

This is not the kind of budget that stimulates great reaction of one kind or another. This is basically a boring budget. There is not much there to get excited about. At a time when there was so much more revenue coming to the provincial Treasury, we might have expected the government to take the opportunity to actually change the tax system, to do something to improve tax fairness in our province.

Instead, all we got was a statement from the Treasurer that he was waiting upon the federal

government, on the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Wilson, to come forward with his long-awaited proposals for tax reform before there was any attempt to improve the fairness of taxes at the provincial level. For some reason the Treasurer believes anything of this nature must be done in concert with the federal government.

1630

I am surprised at this, but the Treasurer seems to be unwilling and unable to lead and unable to take new initiatives on his own. Perhaps he does not have a vision of what this province could be or what this government could do to improve our province for the ordinary people of Ontario. If that is the case, I am surprised. Since I have come to know him, I have come to admire and to like, although disagree with on many occasions, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk. I respect his ability and his capacity for hard work, so I suppose that is one of the reasons I am particularly disappointed by this budget.

I really did think that with \$1 billion extra in revenue that was not anticipated last year—an enormous amount of money, even without increasing taxes—this was an opportunity the Treasurer could have used to try to reform the tax system and ensure that the people of this province who have the ability to pay are paying their fair share, while those who are at the lower levels of the income stratosphere would not have to pay. That was not done.

I suppose the government will point to the fact that it has eliminated Ontario health insurance plan premiums for some people by increasing the level of exemption as an effort to try to improve fairness. I certainly support that attempt but I think it falls far short of what is possible, and certainly far short of what this government—this party that now governs—promised when it was in opposition and promised in the election campaign.

The changes in the income levels for the exemption from OHIP premiums are so low that what it basically means is that if the working poor, the people who make the minimum wage, know about this program, they can get out of having to pay OHIP premiums. It basically means that the people who two years ago did not pay OHIP premiums but whose income was raised slightly when there was a small increase in the minimum wage now again are eligible for not having to pay OHIP premiums.

The Liberal Party, when it was in an election campaign, promised to eliminate OHIP premiums, not just for the working poor, but for everybody. I support that. We are one of the few

provinces, one of four, that actually have health care premiums, medicare premiums. Yet we are certainly supposed to be one of the more wealthy provinces, one of the richest provinces. Why is it that we continue to have medicare premiums at a time that a province like New Brunswick, for instance, does not?

It is one of the most unfair taxes because it has no relationship to income. Perhaps that is one move that might have been taken by a Treasurer with a vision and with a desire to reform and to change. If he was not going to eliminate OHIP premiums, perhaps the system could have been restructured in some way so that the premium paid relates to the actual income of the family or the individual paying the premium, but there was no change except to allow the working poor, the people at the very bottom of the income structure, to avoid paying OHIP premiums.

In our view, nobody who lives below the poverty level as determined by Statistics Canada should be paying OHIP premiums. We propose that a first step would be to take the poverty level for individuals and families and say that no one whose income is below that level should be paying a medicare premium. We estimate that would have cost something like \$260 million to achieve, at a time when this government had \$1 billion more revenue than it expected. It is not a very large sum for a very small step towards eliminating a most unprogressive tax and bringing us in line with other parts of this country, with provincial governments that have much lower revenues than does this government. But there was no attempt to deal with that in this budget.

I looked for a number of other things in this budget. I looked for an attempt by this government to deal with the farm crisis. In my part of Ontario there is no farming and people sometimes think agriculture is not very important. They do not realize that farming is a primary industry of great importance even in my part of Ontario. Young farmers particularly, but farmers in general, are experiencing a real financial crisis at a time when they are being squeezed between competitive attempts to subsidize by the United States and the European Community and when commodity prices are at an all-time low.

In my area, the beef producers particularly, but even the dairy producers, are in serious trouble. The enormous investment that is required today for a young man and woman, a young couple, to enter farming is so great that it is impossible for most young people even to contemplate entering farming. That is a tragedy not just for those young couples who might like

to take over the family farm or even go into farming when they have not been involved directly through their own families before, but I think it is a tragedy for all of rural Ontario and our rural communities.

I admit that the Treasurer did try to deal in this budget with some of the agricultural problems. He continued the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, which I think is very helpful in dealing with interest rates for young farmers. He also tried to improve the property tax exemption for bona fide farmers and he tried to deal with a really serious problem in trying to assist farmers to take land out of production and keep land out of production, whether it be wetlands or woodlots. I suppose that is a genuine effort. Most of that, certainly the OFFIRR program, will be welcomed by a lot of people in rural communities.

But it does not deal with the central problem of how we try to ensure, first, that farmers get an adequate return for their labour, their management and their investment and, second, how we enable young people who wish to enter farming to do it.

I think the amounts that have been proposed by the federal government to assist farming in this country are only a small step and I worry about the future as we seem to be heading more and more into a competition with our trading partners to see who can subsidize agriculture at higher and higher levels. I think that is a no-win situation for Canada and certainly for Ontario, but I do not see any efforts in this budget to respond to that and to try to encourage the federal government to deal with what is a major crisis facing the rural communities, and certainly facing the rural communities in Algoma district.

1640

I hope the federal government will be successful in persuading the partners in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the group of seven to discuss what is happening in agriculture on a world-wide basis, so that we can bring some kind of sanity into this unbelievable competition we seem to be engaged in where each country attempts to subsidize its farm community at a higher rate. Countries like Canada, Australia, Argentina and other, Third World nations that produce agricultural goods just cannot compete on that.

It may sound funny when I include Canada in that list but, in fact, Canada is seen by those other countries as their leader, their spokesperson in dealing with the other industrialized countries to try to put agriculture on the top agenda. But in the

meantime, I hoped this provincial government would be able to respond in a more meaningful way to the agricultural community in Ontario, and particularly in Algoma district.

While I am speaking about rural Ontario, I would like to point specifically to a matter I raised in this Legislature, on which many members of the House spoke, and that is the need for assistance to small rural municipalities to enable them to protect their communities, to protect their homes and properties, by providing them with assistance for fire protection and for fire protection equipment.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that I moved a resolution in this House which was debated in February and was passed unanimously by the Legislature. It said that this assembly favoured the development of a program to provide financial assistance for the purchase of fire protection equipment for small rural municipalities, because we recognize the need and the fact that these small rural municipalities do not have the tax base that enables them to make major purchases of very expensive equipment.

I recognize that the previous government introduced and this government has continued a program, under the unorganized community assistance fund, whereby the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, in conjunction with the fire marshal's office, has provided fire protection equipment for the unorganized communities of northern Ontario where there is a need. That is a very good program and it is one that has the very strong support of the members of my caucus.

I am just saying it is time we recognize that the small organized municipalities also have a need for financial assistance. In a very few cases, the unorganized communities are actually larger in population than some of the organized municipalities. In some cases, it might even be argued that those communities have a greater potential for raising the funds to provide adequate fire protection without as much government assistance than do the rural municipalities.

I do not know what it costs for a pumper truck nowadays. I think it is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$150,000. A rapid-attack vehicle that is purchased under the unorganized community assistance program costs somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$75,000. The rural municipalities cannot afford it. This assembly recognized that, and the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs recognizes it.

I had hoped that after this assembly spoke with one voice on behalf of the rural municipalities

and the need to provide adequate fire protection, the government would have responded and the Treasurer would have provided in his budget for a new program under the Ministry of the Solicitor General or the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to provide grants for fire protection equipment for small municipalities. Unfortunately, it has not happened.

I urge the government to respond. I hope that the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) in conjunction with the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) will be able to prevail upon the Treasurer to recognize the need of rural municipalities throughout Ontario—not just in the north but throughout Ontario—for assistance. I know that the councils of rural municipalities across Ontario have been passing resolutions since the resolution was passed in this Legislature.

I hope the government hears those pleas for assistance from rural Ontario and responds. It has not. The Treasurer, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, who is himself from a rural area did not hear those pleas and did not respond in his budget. It is not too late, though. The government can yet develop a program. It does not mean a lot of expenditure of funds by the provincial government when one considers the total budget of this province, but it certainly means an onerous burden for the small communities if they have to do it on their own. The unconditional grants are just not adequate.

I said earlier that I saw this as a great opportunity. I would like to talk particularly about northern Ontario. As a member from the north, I suppose I expected more from this government partly because the Premier is also the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. When we saw the enormous increase in revenue for the provincial government and at the same time saw that the Premier had a special interest in dealing with the problems of northern Ontario, I expected there might have been a concerted effort by the Treasurer to establish programs and to allocate funding to respond to the economic problems we experience in the north.

I am afraid that I am very disappointed. It was a missed opportunity. I do not know what it means as to the Premier's interest in northern Ontario. It seems to indicate that he is interested in being seen to do something but it does not appear that he is interested in actually changing the situation in northern Ontario.

We heard debate in this House throughout the last year or so about what is happening in the north. I know it is hard for many members from the southern parts of this province to realize it,

but the recession that began in the early 1980s, in 1981 and 1982, and that has ended in southern Ontario and developed into a boom in southern Ontario, has never ended in our part of Ontario.

We do indeed have two Ontarios. I know it has become a bit of a cliché to say in this House that there are two Ontarios, but it is true. At a time when we have a very low unemployment rate in this province in terms of the rest of the country, something in the neighbourhood of six per cent, we have double that unemployment rate in northern Ontario.

Frankly, I do not consider six per cent a low unemployment rate. There was a time when the unemployment rate reaching six per cent would have been considered a serious problem in our economy. It is not that many years ago when if we had more than three per cent unemployment, it was determined that there was a need for a concerted government effort to stimulate the economy to provide jobs.

It says something as to how politicians and the people who make economic decisions now view our economy that when we reach a six per cent unemployment rate, they say: "Well, that is not too bad. We are doing all right." It says something about our economy that we can have a boom, can have so much construction going on, can have so much investment and can have such high profits in the Golden Horseshoe and in Metropolitan Toronto, but at the same time we can bypass such a large percentage of our work force, particularly our younger work force, and still say things are okay. If you are part of that six per cent, things are not okay.

1650

I was a member of a committee appointed by this government that visited Sweden not much more than a year ago. It is interesting that in that country there is a consensus on the part of government, parties of all three sorts, whether they be Social Democrat, Liberal or Conservative, the business community and labour that there must be a full employment strategy. In that country, where they have approximately four per cent to 4.5 per cent unemployment, they consider that too high.

In Sweden, they have initiated many programs to retrain workers, to relocate workers, to enable them to get back into the work force, to ensure they have an adequate income and to provide services to the community that will also provide work so that they can do something about an unemployment rate of four per cent to 4.5 per cent.

Mr. Runciman: A Valhalla for socialists.

Mr. Foulds: Bill Davis's first speech from the throne in 1971 talked about an unconscionable unemployment rate of four per cent.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

An hon. member: Times have changed.

Mr. Wildman: That is what I am saying: Times have changed. It is unfortunate that economists generally in this country—

Mr. Brandt: I do not accept it; it is nonsense.

Mr. Wildman: I know it may sound funny coming from me, Mr. Speaker, but I was attempting not to be partisan in this effort. In fact, what I am saying is that economists of all sorts, from all parts of the political spectrum, look at six per cent unemployment in Ontario and say it is good. Well, it is not good.

In response to the member for Leeds (Mr. Runciman) about Sweden being a socialist Valhalla, though it is certainly true that they have a Social Democratic government and have had for most of the last 40 years and have a lot of good programs, the interesting thing about Sweden—

Mr. Runciman: Dull as dishwater.

Mr. Wildman: I did not find it dull. I found it tremendously interesting, and I think most of the people from the committee, whether they be New Democrats, Liberals or Conservatives, found it an interesting visit. But what I want to say is that when we spoke to representatives of small business and big business, as well as government and labour leaders, there were differences of view, of course, but generally they all agreed that anything over three per cent unemployment was too high. There is a consensus in that country, a consensus I wish we could build in this country, that there must be a political will to direct investment in such a way as to ensure that there is a full employment strategy.

No matter whether one is a Conservative or a Liberal or, for that matter, a member of the small Communist Party in Sweden, none of them disagrees with the view that there must be a full employment program. We do not have that in North America. We do not have it in most of the rest of western Europe for that matter.

Mr. Runciman: What do you consider full employment?

Mr. Wildman: It used to be that we defined full employment as three per cent unemployment. That was the definition of full employment. What scares me is that we seem to have moved from that to something in the neighbour-

hood of six or seven per cent unemployment as full employment, and that is what worries me.

Having said that, I would like to deal specifically with northern Ontario. I said we have double the unemployment rate in the north that we have across the province. We have 13 per cent unemployment. Whether you accept six per cent or three per cent, no one can argue that 13 per cent is acceptable. It is not. It is much too high. I want to tell the members that it would be higher than 13 per cent if we had not had this serious outmigration over the last few years of people coming to southern Ontario to look for work. Even that 13 per cent does not describe what is really happening in our northern communities.

Basically, there has been an expansion in one area and one area alone in the northern economy, and that is gold mining. There has been a lot of exploration going on; there has been the Hemlo development; there have been some developments in gold around Timmins and Kirkland Lake. Other than that one small sector of our resource economy, there has not been any stimulation of employment in the north.

Our lumber industries are threatened, partly because of trade issues and the imposition of the United States export tax but also because of competition from offshore. Even our major manufacturing enterprises, such as Algoma Steel, are contemplating serious cutbacks and layoffs.

In this budget there were a number of things I expected to happen, not just because the Premier is the acting Minister of Northern Development and Mines but also because this government has made a great deal of being concerned about the problems of the north and wanting to respond.

I have had discussions with my good friend the member for Cochrane North, who is really concerned about the problems in the north but apparently has little influence in the government. He told me earlier, for instance, that he expected we would be doing something about gasoline prices. We have high gasoline prices in the north. Everyone in this House knows that. It has been talked about enough; I will not go into it at great length. Even the provincial government's own study recognized that we pay approximately \$70 million more a year in higher gasoline prices than they do in southern Ontario.

The member for Cochrane North led me to believe, I think because he understood, that in this budget there would be at least an attempt to match that differential in terms of additional funding for highways.

I do not believe we should have to pay for decent roads by paying higher gasoline prices. We should pay for good roads through taxation, the same as every other resident of this province. We should not have to pay any more than a person in southern Ontario does to have decent roads. We deserve an adequate transportation system, particularly if we are going to try to stimulate growth in the north, whether it be in the tourist industry or in the resource industries or in manufacturing. We deserve an adequate transportation system and we should not have to pay more.

But at least, I understood, we were going to get something like \$70 million additional funding for roads. Well, \$70 million is not very much. What we got was \$26 million.

Mr. Davis: Thirteen miles of roads.

Mr. Wildman: We did talk to a couple of Ministry of Transportation and Communications engineers, to ask them how much new roadbuilding could be done for that amount of money. They indicated that it depends on whether we are talking about an urban road or a provincial highway in a rural area. It also depends on whether rock has to be moved. Once rock has to be moved, it doubles the price. Having said that, to build a new provincial highway would range somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1.2 million to \$2.4 million per mile of new highway. At that rate, we are indeed talking about 13 miles, maybe 18 or 20 miles at the most.

Yet the members of the government would like to go around the north saying, "Look what we have done for you: \$26 million." I have told a number of my constituents and the people I meet in northern Ontario that it is time we started to think big. I do not see why we should accept \$26 million as being some kind of commitment by this government. Compared to \$1 billion extra in revenue, \$26 million is a pittance, as I said to the Premier. The Premier got kind of angry when I said that. He said I should somehow call upon the Lieutenant Governor and cause an election.

1700

I do not think an election is going to get us more money. I honestly hope we are not going to deal just on the partisan basis with the problems of the north. I am not trying to be pompous or holier than thou or anything. I just think it is time we dealt with the problems of northern Ontario. And \$26 million for roads is an insult; that is all it is. The Sault Ste. Marie Star wrote an editorial. It said, "Why is it that when the government finally responds in some way to the problems of the north, the member for Algoma pooh-poohs it?"

The fact is that people in northern Ontario have to realize that \$26 million is 13 to 18 miles of road. I do not need to pooh-pooh that.

The Speaker will know that as a member of this Legislature and this caucus for a number of years, I have campaigned very hard for the establishment of a northern Ontario fund. I have long believed, as have members of my party, that a much greater percentage of the revenue that accrues to the provincial Treasury from the resource industries of the north should be returned to the north for reinvestment to diversify the economy and stimulate jobs.

I have worked to persuade members of this Legislature to establish such a fund, as have other members of my caucus. I worked as a member of the Advisory Committee on Resource Dependent Communities in Northern Ontario to persuade that committee. That committee did endorse the idea. It said a fund should be established along the lines of the Alberta heritage savings trust fund, to be controlled and operated by northerners to produce growth and jobs in the north. It has gotten to the point where it is accepted by everyone in this Legislature, no matter what political party, that we should have a northern Ontario fund of some sort.

Recently, the standing committee on resources development, an all-party committee, endorsed the idea. The question is not whether we have a fund but what sort of fund it should be and how it should be operated.

When I asked the Treasurer earlier this year whether he was going to establish a northern Ontario fund, I think he said it was a glint in his eye. It did not become anything more than that. It remained a glint in his eye. That is all it is: a slight flicker of interest in this idea of a northern Ontario fund, \$30 million.

Mr. Pouliot: A vote-getter, a gimmick.

Mr. Wildman: I hope the Liberals do try to win votes in northern Ontario, if that is what they were trying to do by talking about a \$30 million fund.

The problem we have is that the ordinary people of this province do not recognize that \$30 million is the same amount of money this government is paying for its share of one project in Toronto, the domed stadium. They are putting \$30 million into a hole in the ground in Toronto and saying the same amount is going to stimulate growth and make a difference in the economy of the whole of northern Ontario.

This is an example of the continuation of the Tory colonial policy towards northern Ontario: "Throw them a few crumbs, tell them you are

doing something, make them feel good, but do not change anything. Do not actually try to change the economy of the north. Do not actually try to produce jobs."

I honestly expected more from this government. I expected more from the Premier. How does one justify providing \$30 million for the whole of northern Ontario when the government is providing \$35 million for one Toyota plant in Cambridge? Not only that; they are also providing something in the neighbourhood of \$15 million in tax breaks to Toyota. I am not opposed to assisting the establishment of a car industry in Cambridge to provide jobs in Cambridge, but let us all recognize that \$30 million for the whole of northern Ontario is not going to change anything in the north.

If the government were giving \$30 million to one project in the north, it might mean something; but one fund of \$30 million does not. The previous government, in the 1981 election, promised \$19.5 million in 1981 for one project in my riding. It has not come about yet, but the commitment is still there. This government has said it will honour that commitment. I think that puts in some perspective what \$30 million means. The \$19.5 million for one tourism development in Algoma district in 1981 is matched by this government by \$30 million for all of northern Ontario and every proposed project.

The layoffs at Algoma Steel will take approximately \$45 million per annum out of the economy of that one city—\$45 million a year less in income; \$45 million less to be spent on purchases by consumers; \$45 million less for the small businesses of the area; \$45 million less that might have been used in terms of reinvestment in some ways to help the economy of Sault Ste. Marie.

Let us start at that point. The layoffs in Sault Ste. Marie mean there will be \$45 million less in that economy. What is the answer from this government? They will say: "It is unfair to say—you cannot say—the northern Ontario fund is the only answer. After all, we have done other things for Sault Ste. Marie. We have moved the Ontario Lottery Corp. there. We have moved the forestry resources group there. There are some jobs going to Sault Ste. Marie. There is going to be a new building built in Sault Ste. Marie."

That is true. There are jobs going to Sault Ste. Marie and there is going to be a building there. That approach by this government is useful in that I hope it means some of the people who make the decisions and provide the advice on policy for

this government will actually live in northern Ontario and gain a better understanding of the problems of our part of the province. But let us all be honest. It is not going to replace the 1,200 to 1,500 jobs lost at Algoma Steel. It does not go anywhere near replacing those jobs.

What is being proposed by this government to deal with that economic crisis in that city, a crisis that affects not only Sault Ste. Marie but also all of Algoma district and particularly Wawa? It suggests \$30 million in a northern Ontario fund will do it, and it has also been said by some Liberals: "This is just the start. We can add more to it later."

That is backwards. If you are actually going to respond and provide a fund, what you need to do is provide a tremendous infusion of capital that will then grow as it is invested and will be there to enable the government to invest in business and development in the north, on the advice of and controlled by northerners. Thirty million dollars is not going to produce that kind of revenue even from interest.

As a person who has campaigned for so long in this House for this kind of program, I resent the fact that this government has appropriated the name of this program and then put just this small amount of money into it so it means nothing.

I have not dealt with the fact that this \$30 million is the same amount of revenue that is going to come to the provincial government from the US-imposed export tax on lumber.

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Basically, what that means is not only is there a small commitment by this government, it is almost zilch, because it means that the government is not providing any of the additional revenue that is going to the provincial Treasury from provincial sources and provincial taxes. What it is providing is this windfall, if you want to call it that, that is hurting the lumber industry itself. We believe that money should have been reinvested in the lumber industry and lumber communities and that it should not have been taken and put in the fund, with the government saying: "That is it. That is the total fund for northern Ontario," because it is inadequate.

I do not know what to make of the government. I said I expected more. I have tried to interpret what the programs for the north mean in this budget. I have to come to the conclusion there can be only two choices. One, perhaps the decisions that have been made in the budget related to northern Ontario are related to partisan political advantage. If that is the case, in my view, it means the Liberals have decided there

are not many ridings in northern Ontario and some of those ridings might be hard for Liberals to win because they were a long way back, so why bother. Forget about it. Forget about the north.

I suppose as an opposition member, if that is the case, I should be happy, but I am not. I hope it is not the case but if it is not, the only other choice I think must be that the government honestly does not know what to do about the serious economic depression that we are experiencing in northern Ontario. It does not know what to do about the one-industry towns. It does not know how to deal with the boom-bust situation we have experienced. The only thing it can do is to continue the conservative, colonial approach to the north. All it has been able to do is to fall back on the approach to northern Ontario that has been taken ever since we first put the railroad into the north.

I think the Conservative members of the Legislature, as well as the northern members on the other side, recognize that we have a serious problem in the economy in northern Ontario. They also recognize that we have a lot of potential in northern Ontario. I hope so anyway. I think they do. They recognize that we have a skilled, energetic work force. They recognize that we have tremendous resource wealth, but they also recognize that we are experiencing serious problems partly related to trade and world commodity prices and partly related to the new technologies and the new developments in the economy that are making us less competitive. It is not just northern Ontario. The resource areas of most industrialized countries are experiencing similar problems.

The iron range in Minnesota is experiencing the same problems that the mining industry in northern Ontario is experiencing. The northern part of England, the heavy industry part of Germany, the shipbuilding and steel industries in Sweden, all of them are experiencing serious problems because we are having to compete on a worldwide basis with Third World countries that have new infrastructure, new capital plant—

Mr. Haggerty: Supplied by the banks.

Mr. Wildman: Which are largely supplied by investment from our banks. That is certainly true. In many cases, they are selling at a loss on the world market because they need hard currency. The question is, how do we respond? Do we take innovative new approaches? Do we try to develop along the lines they have attempted in northern Sweden or do we fall back on the tried-and-true approach of throwing a little bit of

money, and I underline the words "little bit of money"?"

Mr. Mancini: What is \$1 million? What is \$30 million?

Mr. Wildman: Thirty million is the same amount the government is spending on the SkyDome in downtown Toronto.

Mr. Mancini: What is \$1 million? What is \$30 million? What is \$40 million? Nothing, to you guys.

Mr. Pouliot: Go and wear your Guccis. Keep the Guccis Come on, Remo. You have never been north of Barrie. Give me a break.

Mr. Foulds: There is \$58 million for one community and \$30 million to rehabilitate the whole economy in northern Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order. Will the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) take his seat and the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) take his seat.

Mr. Mancini: Forty million is just loose change for you guys.

The Acting Speaker: Will the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) please remain quiet. There is a period called questions and comments afterwards. If you have any comments or any questions please ask them afterwards.

Mr. Wildman: I recognize that there is \$30 million being provided in the northern Ontario fund by this government. But as I said earlier, and I guess the member for Essex South did not hear me, \$30 million is \$15 million less than what is being lost to the economy of one community because of the layoffs at Algoma Steel in Sault Ste. Marie; \$15 million less than what is being lost to one community; \$30 million is \$30 million, but it is not enough. That is the point. It is time that all of us in this House recognized that \$30 million is not going to do anything to change the basic economic structure in northern Ontario. It is not.

I said earlier that a Liberal said: "Well, it's just a beginning. There'll be lots more." But that is backwards. That is not the approach the Alberta government used when it established its heritage fund. They established a large pool of capital at the beginning, which would then grow. One does not start with a small amount and then try to build it up on the way. It will not work.

I do resent very much the appropriation by this government of the term "northern fund" without putting any money into it. It means, as I said, one of two things. Either the government has decided to be very political about this and say: "Okay, the conventional wisdom now is that we need to have

a northern Ontario fund. Everybody, of no matter what political stripe, agrees with that, so we had better have one. But we really don't believe in it. We're just going to establish a fund and put a little bit of money into it and say, 'Okay, there, we did it.'"

Or, it means they do not know what to do with the fund and they do not know what to do with the money. They have no idea. Well, I do not know why they do not. There have been lots of studies done. There have been lots of proposals. One can go back for years through the proposals. We have had too many studies done, but there have been lots of things proposed. Northerners themselves have a lot of ideas.

I do not understand. If I were a Liberal, I do not know how I would be able to go to the north and say that \$26 million for roads means something or that \$30 million in a northern heritage fund really means there is a commitment by the government to resolve the problems of the north. Compared to any of our own household incomes, \$30 million is a lot of money, but compared to \$1 billion in additional revenue for this government, it is not a lot of money.

Why is it that Toyota can get \$35 million for one plant in Cambridge and the 800,000 people of northern Ontario are supposed to be happy with \$30 million for the whole of their region? Why? That works out to something between 15 and 20 cents for each northerner in additional funds this year, enough to a hot dog way back when. There are not many hot dogs you can buy for less than a buck today.

I am disappointed. I expected more from this government, not just in dollars, but in imagination. I thought we were going to have a fund. The member for Cochrane North said to me: "Well, there, Bud. You got your fund." I did not get my fund. The New Democrats did not get the fund they have been campaigning for. Northerners did not get the fund they have been crying for. What we got was a façade, a fraud, and it is not good enough.

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People in the north were fed up with this approach when it was provided by the Conservative Party when it was in power. We used to have the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) running around the north handing out cheques. Now it seems we have members of this party running around the north handing out cheques. They can hand out all the cheques they like, they can give a cheque here and a cheque there, but it is not going to change anything. They can provide a cheque for Wawa, they can provide a cheque for Sault

Ste. Marie, they can provide a cheque for North Bay—

Mr. Mancini: If the socialists were in government, there would be no cheques, right? There would be nothing.

Mr. Wildman: When our party comes to power, I hope we will have a strategy for northern development based on responding to the new realities of our economy, a strategy designed to diversify the economy, not just to emphasize tourism, not just to improve our transportation system, but actually to develop along the new technologies. I also hope that strategy would be controlled by northerners and they would have a real role in developing the strategy and then implementing it.

If, after doing that, the ministers, whether they be from southern Ontario or northern Ontario, want to hand out the cheque, want to cut the ribbon, fine, great; but it cannot be just handing out cheques and cutting ribbons. It cannot be just riding in fire trucks with the sirens blaring and the lights going. It cannot be just that, because if it is just that, everything stays the same.

We get a new fire truck, we get a new building, we get a new program, but we still end up needing jobs and development. We still end up with our young people leaving the community and going to southern Ontario if they want jobs or being chronically underemployed. We still end up paying higher prices, not only for gasoline but also for milk and other basic consumer products. The more expensive it is for fuel and for other consumer products, the more difficult it is to attract business and to make business a viable competitor in northern communities.

It appears, from the reaction to what I have said, that the members on that side of the House do not understand. I guess that is because there is not a very strong northern voice in the government.

Mr. Runciman: Where is Ed Havrot when you need him?

Mr. Wildman: I did not think I would ever say, "Bring back Ed Havrot," but maybe that would be an improvement. When Ed Havrot was the member for Timiskaming, there was not any different approach to northern Ontario, there was not any attempt to pretend that the government was actually trying to change the economy of northern Ontario to end the boom-bust situation, our dependence on resources, to provide jobs for our young people—

Mr. Runciman: But.

Mr. Wildman: But the one thing—the member said "but"—but at least Ed Havrot, for all his faults, and they were legion, was honest about what he was doing and why he was doing it.

I expected this budget would respond to the problems of the north in at least some small ways. I expected we would get at least the same amount that we pay in extra gasoline prices for roads. We got less than half of that. We got something like 13 to 20 miles of road. I expected it would mean we would at last have a northern Ontario fund established, not necessarily established along the lines I would like, but at least a substantial amount of capital set aside to try to change the economy of northern Ontario. Instead, we got less than the government is prepared to spend on one manufacturing plant in Cambridge for all of northern Ontario.

I believe this budget is a serious missed opportunity for northerners, and I honestly believe it is also a missed opportunity for the Liberals. Let us face it, we are all here in a political process, and the Liberals would be attempting to win more seats in northern Ontario, just as we and the Conservatives are. I would have thought, with the revenue they had and with the Premier as Minister of Northern Development and Mines, there would have been some imaginative new programs establishing retraining, stimulating small business and development and improving our transportation and communication systems in the north.

That did not happen. We have what is a glossy attempt to say: "We are doing something about transportation. We are actually trying to do something about the economy by establishing a fund." But the amounts of money in it belie what the budget attempts to do. The amounts of money show that there is no real commitment by the government, either because it has decided on a political level that it cannot win enough seats for it to make any difference or, even more seriously, it has decided on a policy level that it does not know what to do about the problems of northern Ontario and believes the concentration in Metro Toronto and the Golden Horseshoe must continue and that more of our people must move out of the north to get jobs. If they wish to stay at home, they are going to stay underemployed and underdeveloped.

I said at the beginning that this was a Conservative budget. It is. It is a stay-put, self-satisfied, status quo budget, which may be fine for southern Ontario where there is a boom going on and everyone is getting jobs, or most people are. But it fails to recognize that the status

quo in northern Ontario is not something anyone wants to continue. In fact, we need change, we need innovation, we need imagination and, above all, we need a commitment on the part of the government, a political will to take the risks necessary to actually change the northern economy. I am most disappointed that the government did not meet that challenge.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for Nipissing.

Mr. Harris: I am not one to want to give up these two-minute opportunities to join with my colleagues. Let me say that I saw a part of the member's speech from my office while I was attending a meeting. I could not help but have my eyes and ears drawn to my set and I am sorry I was not able to be present in the House for all his remarks.

Suffice it to say that there were a few of his remarks that I may not agree with entirely vis-à-vis some of the efforts of former governments in northern Ontario, but I have never disputed the member's interest and vociferous lobbying on behalf of not only his constituents but also all the constituents of northern Ontario. I have sensed a certain collegiality that has developed among some members of the Legislature from northern Ontario. I suppose it is a collegiality of necessity, particularly over the deteriorating situation of the last few years.

I do not want to get into nitpicking over 1985 versus 1984. We were facing some very serious problems through all the 1980s. Indeed, all the province faced problems throughout the early 1980s. I guess what has made them very different is the growing discrepancy as this booming recovery has taken place in southern Ontario and the north is probably worse off today than it was three or four years ago.

The member made some very valid points that perhaps structural changes had to be made earlier on.

1730

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Your time has expired.

Mr. Harris: I would be interested if the member would talk a little more about and explain some of those structural changes that have not been made, particularly in the last few years.

Mr. Wildman: I thank the member for Nipissing for his comments. I agree that there is indeed a sort of collegiality among members from the north, as I am sure there is among members in the House who come from other

regions. Because there are smaller numbers of us, there is an understanding among most of us of the serious problems we face.

There must be a tremendous effort on the part of government to provide not just capital, but also expertise to assist small business, communities and individuals in northern Ontario who have ideas for potential economic development, for new enterprises and for jobs. That must be provided by government but it must be prepared to make mistakes and to take risks.

To be frank, I do not think, for instance, that the major investment made at Minaki responded adequately even to the needs of Minaki. But the government must be prepared to recognize that we have major problems. We have to improve the transportation system. We have to improve the communications system. We have to provide capital on a loan basis in joint ventures. There must be a willingness by the government to invest directly in enterprises, some of which will fail, but some of which hopefully will provide jobs.

I think we have to build on our strengths and our resources. We should be trying to develop the kinds of industries that fabricate the products we are already producing.

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Wildman: For instance, if there were a similar number of jobs proportionately in Sault Ste. Marie related to the steel industry as there are in Hamilton, we would have about 9,000 more jobs.

Mr. G. I. Miller: It is a pleasure to rise as the member for Haldimand-Norfolk to speak in the budget debate. This is the first time we have had the opportunity since the election of May 2, 1985. We were on the other side of the House. Things have happened and now we have moved over here, so I would like to take a moment just to say thanks to my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk, to all those good people who have helped support us over the years, the regional council and the local councillors. We have enjoyed representing that riding.

Last night, history again was made when the nomination was held in Caledonia. The Treasurer is going to have the opportunity of representing part of that riding if those voters see us kindly. That is really what we are debating here now, the budget. It gives an opportunity for all members to participate.

Again, I would like to say it has been a pleasure working with members from all sides of the House. There are certainly a lot of members

who are not going to be back next time around, 14 from the official opposition, a couple from the New Democratic Party and a couple from our own caucus. We really cherish the friendships we have made since 1975. We want to wish them well.

Again, I would like to say thanks to the NDP for agreeing to have a change in government a couple of years ago. The member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis) indicated in his opening remarks that somebody had a dream. I had a dream in 1975 that we might make the government of Ontario. It took quite a while, but 10 years later we have that opportunity. It is just like a fresh wind blowing across Ontario with some new ideas and some new approaches. The speeches that have been given here in the Legislature have shown a little envy on behalf of the opposition.

There is one other thing I would like to do before I get to the details of the budget. My mother will be celebrating her 90th birthday on June 4. We have given out a lot of scrolls in the last 12 years. This is going to be the first time we can give one directly to our family. We are pleased with that. She is not able to enjoy excellent health but she is using good services that have been provided in the region of Haldimand-Norfolk, the Norfolk Hospital Nursing Home. She gets excellent care. We intend to bring her down to the farm to have a birthday party on Sunday, God willing. We are looking forward to that also.

Most satisfying is the fact that we have been able to put a budget together. As we wound up the throne speech last Tuesday, I listened carefully to the Minister of Education as he responded on behalf of our party. I knew he was going to upset the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) because he used his phrases and turned them around magnificently. If we read Hansard, it is going to be an interesting 20 minutes.

We paid the penalty. When the Leader of the Opposition responded to the budget on Thursday, he made us suffer. It was kind of agonizing. He went on for a couple of hours. I think he spent the money for the budget several times. What is coming across from the other side of the House is how they would have done it compared to how we did it. I would like to congratulate the—

Mr. Davis: You did not do anything.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I do not know whether I would like to go to a service conducted by the member for Scarborough Centre. I do not know if he fabricates untruths but I think he does stretch

the figures. He has a good knack of doing that. I admire that ability. We still have a lot of respect for the member for Scarborough Centre and we had the opportunity of working on Bill 30 for quite a few days. I guess that is the job of the opposition.

I am pleased to support the Treasurer and to think that we are part of the team that has been able to manage the province's business over the last couple of years. The tax cuts that have been accomplished, \$246 million, and a reduction in the deficit to \$980 million are highlights of the 1987-88 Ontario budget presented to the Legislature by my colleague and friend the Treasurer.

The budget provides financial commitments to ease the tax burden primarily for low-income earners and seniors, funds essential priorities in education, high technology, health, housing, child care, transportation and the environment and creates new development programs for northern and eastern Ontario.

The member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) has disappeared now but I think my colleague indicated that if things were as bad as they have indicated, maybe they would not want to live in the north. I am proud to be an Ontarian and I think our Premier is proud to represent the province, not only because it is Ontario but also because it is part of Canada. He has shown that leadership.

1740

When one really examines it closely, we have problems all over Ontario. I can give examples as far as southern Ontario is concerned where it is as difficult as in any place in Canada, but working together we can resolve the problems. I think that is the bottom line and that is what we on this side of the House want to accomplish.

We want to deliver needed assistance to the Ontario agricultural community and reduce the province's net cash requirement. The Treasurer announced that the budget contained no tax increases. Looking at it from my perspective, it is an excellent budget showing good leadership for Ontario.

"The government is committed to achieving a durable prosperity that is shared by all," the Treasurer said. The 1987 budget is aimed at promoting economic growth and regional development, rebuilding ageing infrastructures, improving social programs and maintaining vigilance over tax levels and the deficit. I might indicate that the deficit has gone from \$2.1 billion down to \$980 million, which is very significant and indicates that money management in Ontario is in good hands.

The Treasurer announced plans to reduce income and property taxes and increased Ontario health insurance plan premium assistance for low-income persons, measures that will put \$115 million into the hands of low- and moderate-income people. This plan includes an increase of \$180 to \$230 in the basic property tax credit, providing 1.8 million Ontario tax filers with increased benefits of \$85 million. The 1987 budget increase brings the total value of the program to \$360 million.

A \$10-million expansion of the Ontario tax reduction program removes another 100,000 Ontarians from the tax rolls and reduces taxes for a further 60,000. With this change, a total of 600,000 low-income Ontarians will pay no Ontario income tax. There is a \$20-million commitment to eliminate OHIP premium payments for an additional 40,000 individual families.

An increase from \$500 to \$600 in the maximum property tax grants for seniors affects 570,000 seniors' households and brings the total property tax for seniors to \$385 million. The budget also raises the sales tax exemption on prepared food from \$2 to \$4, effective June 1. I was checking downstairs today and we may even manage to have a lunch here without paying tax.

Education, which is top priority with our government, will be enhanced through financial commitments to improve the basic quality of education, to build and upgrade educational facilities and to expand opportunities for retraining. I would like to give an example of how the co-op program is being utilized in our own area. A young grade 11 student is training as a mechanic in a local garage while taking his grade 11 education and it is working out well. There are many young people taking advantage of those co-op programs.

Another commitment was to the funding of the Rolph Street school in Tillsonburg, which is an old school. We went to the 75th reunion last Saturday. It has not been touched in those 75 years with the exception of minor maintenance. They are looking forward to spending \$1.3 million on building a new gymnasium, which they did not have, as well as providing a library and adequate facilities.

We had another school in Caledonia requesting funding, but because they did not meet the criteria, they did not get funding. I think it indicates that we are putting money where it is really needed and are sharing. Sure, it is going to cost our taxpayers some matching funds but it is

with that co-operation and working together that we can achieve those basic needs.

The Ontario government and the local school boards together will spend almost \$9 billion on primary and secondary schools this year, which is equivalent to \$47 million every school day. Commitment to education in the budget includes provincial capital grants for primary and secondary schools of \$147 million; provision of capital funds for the colleges and universities of \$100 million, double the level of two years ago; an advance commitment to increase spending for the primary and secondary schools to \$226 million in the 1988-89 fiscal year.

As members can see, it cannot all be completed at one time. It does have to be spaced. The taxes can only go so far. I think the plan that was put in place is excellent.

Technology development is another area. The budget reiterates the key role that the Premier's council on technology and a \$1 billion technological fund will play in helping Ontario realize its long-term potential for growth and development. The Treasurer said \$100 million is committed for the technological fund starting this year.

Health care of course plays an important role. As I indicated, we have committed much to our hospitals around the province. We have received our share, particularly in my riding, where three programs are under way with co-operative housing for our seniors: one in Port Rowan where they are making this study; one in Dunnville, where they are making a study; and Port Dover is also involved in making a study to provide better accommodation for our seniors. A new seniors' centre will be opening in Cayuga this summer. One is at Townsend and one is due to open in Simcoe in the first part of June.

Again, I am satisfied with the progress that has been made in our area, providing housing for seniors and the commitment of our government is to strengthen that.

The enhancement of housing support service for disabled persons, is another area. The budget provides a \$50-a-month increase in the guaranteed annual income system for benefits for low-income disabled persons, to be paid beginning June 30, at a cost of \$45 million in 1987-88.

Transportation is another area that is going to play a key role in developing Ontario. Again, our friend the member for Algoma indicated that the money they received for northern Ontario was not adequate. We have to consider the high cost of construction. The fact is Toronto has always been a magnet because of the cost of construction in this area and the demand is heavy. In order to

develop rural parts of Ontario, transportation does play a tremendous role. While the north needs that assistance, southern Ontario and many parts of rural Ontario need improvements also.

To give an example, we have an investment in my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk of Stelco, which is one of the most modern steel plants in the world and Texaco is located there, as is the Ontario Hydro generating station, one of the largest coal-fired stations in the world. They are not being serviced by a Ministry of Transportation and Communications road. They are being serviced by our regional roads. If we really want to see that investment of \$3 billion develop the industrial parks there, we have to have a first class MTC road to get to it. I am committed to seeing that happen.

I know we have to share with construction around other parts of Ontario and it is not going to be easy to do the financing. But it is important to the future that all areas have access and even the federal government should be committed to play a role to assist in improving our transportation facilities.

Looking back over the years, the Trans-Canada Highway was basically funded by federal funds and it really opened up the north and I think there has to be a commitment at all levels of government in order to get the potential that we have under way.

Of course we are committed to the environment, and being a member of the committee that has been looking at acid rain, we are proud of the minister's commitment to work to control acid rain because it affects all of us. He is moving ahead on the recommendations that were brought in by the committee and we are committed to that.

1750

Recycling is another area to which we and the minister are committed. We cannot continue to pile our waste in rural parts of Ontario. I think we have to utilize recycling, and slowly but surely we are making progress on that.

Upgrading our water and sewage systems is another example of where we and the minister have been responsible. In the region of Haldimand-Norfolk, under the old regime, the Conservative government was committed to paying 15 per cent of the cost of new construction. This minister has committed 75 per cent. The former minister is sitting across the way. He knows very well that we could not afford to do it under those terms. It is not going to be easy to do it yet, but it is certainly a step forward. Again, it is going to cost our local taxpayers money, but it

is something that is needed and has to be done. They need to be upgraded, and we are committed to that. The Ministry of the Environment has been working well on behalf of all the people in Ontario.

I could go on at great length, but I want to get into some other areas. Some of our former speakers took more time than anticipated. It was interesting, of course. We have to be patient in this game and wait it out and listen carefully.

I would like to get to agriculture, because as the parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, I have played a role in putting together some policies I have felt very strongly about during the 10 years I have been in the Legislature. Now we have a chance to put them in place and see how they respond.

We have not had too much time. We were always bugging the former Ministers of Agriculture and Food. We did have three or four. They were very co-operative, but we could not get them to respond, to give instant assistance when we really required it.

When we came through the 1980s, the first part of the 1980s to 1985, our interest rates went up to 25 per cent. We have inherited a terrible problem that is not going to be easy to deal with. But I will say that we have worked on it. The one program we put in place, first of all, was the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, which is an interest assistance program. The former government was able to get 1,200 applications. We estimated there should be 12,000, and we received 10,000 applications in 1986-87.

This year we have extended the program with the hope that we will be able to assist 18,000 young farmers, or farmers generally, in the province. I am not sure how that is working out. I have indicated to the minister that we were not reaching those goals. They are not as high as they were last year, and I thought it was too complicated and should be simplified so that people could get easier access to it. All farmers need it, and they deserve it. They need it in order to stay alive, and they should not have to go through the wringer in order to get that funding to keep them in business.

The other area we were able to bring in was the farm tax rebate. It is a major step forward. It is going to put another \$18 million in the farmers' hands. The minister announced it on May 22. The farm tax rebate will cover all farm land and buildings, and the farmers will have to pay tax only on their house and lot. As I indicated, that is

going to put \$18 million in the hands of the farming community.

The farm management safety and repair program will provide \$50 million to assist farmers with farm analysis and planning, farm safety, machinery repairs, shop equipment and on-farm feed and grain storage. Under this program, the government will pay up to \$2,500 per farmer, and all farmers with a gross farm income of at least \$12,000 per year are eligible for the program, which runs from June 1, 1987, to May 31, 1988.

Members may have noticed we have had some sort of smart-aleck comments made about that, but anyone who has gone to pick up some parts for his farm equipment will realize—I had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago to pick up a harrow tooth for one cultivator. One tooth was \$30. If you had to replace them all, it would cost you a lot of dollars. The feet for that cultivator were \$5 apiece. When you take corn at \$2.20 a bushel or barley at \$1 a bushel, there is just no way you can get the cost of production out of it, and you cannot work your land properly if you do not have proper equipment. If you are going to use the equipment, it is going to wear out. I know we have some farmer friends on the opposition side who understand that. They work with it every day.

The other thing is that the program will provide good storage facilities. If you are going to have good markets, you have to have good-quality grain, so storage plays a very important role.

This money is going to help that farmer, from a safety point of view, to put a good seat on his tractor so he is not going to not fall off, because he cannot afford to replace that tractor under the conditions he has had. I think it is going to be a program that will be very useful.

The other program that was put in place that affects my riding considerably, and southwestern Ontario, the Ontario tobacco farmers, is a program of \$30 million we have come in with. This is a co-operative effort between the federal government and the provincial government. A committee has been struck with the tobacco board representatives, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, the Minister of Agriculture for Canada, plus the manufacturers and the tobacco industry themselves.

We have been able to stabilize. We had a report back only last week from the board indicating how the program is working. They have come to an agreement with the tobacco

manufacturers for three years, and they are going to be able to produce 110 million pounds of tobacco, which is about 60 per cent of what they have produced over the past 10 years. I think that is a major step forward.

This program comes into effect and takes the tobacco quota off the market. The indications are that 61 farmers have utilized it. Almost seven million pounds of tobacco have been put on the market and 3,185,000 pounds have been taken off the market—that much quota.

I think that is the only way we are going to survive in that industry, if the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) gets off our backs a little bit and lets people make their own decision whether they should use tobacco, whether they should be able to smoke a cigar or whether I should smoke my pipe, and if the federal government leaves free speech alone and lets us advertise like everyone else. It is not an illegal product.

I see I brought the member back to his seat. I am pleased with that.

I think that, as long as we are using the product, it is going to be on our shelves, and the indications are that—

Mr. Sterling: We want to help the tobacco farmers, we don't want to hinder them. We want to give them money, not the cheap programs you have brought forward.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I am going to run out of time, I can see.

I think what we want to achieve is the fact that we are reducing the quota. If we can get it down so the young farmer or the farmer can use a bigger percentage of his quota, he can survive. I think the future out there is going to be good for tobacco for many years if they leave us alone.

Mr. Sterling: I hope not; people are dying because of it.

The Acting Speaker: Order, the member for Carleton-Grenville.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I see the time is quickly running out.

The Acting Speaker: I would like to bring your attention to the clock. Perhaps you would like to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I will, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and I will be back on tomorrow.

On motion by Mr. Miller, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Thursday, May 28, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, May 28, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

CLEAN WATER ACT

Mrs. Marland moved second reading of Bill 41, An Act to encourage the Rehabilitation of Water Delivery Systems in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for her presentation, and she may reserve any part of that for the windup.

Mrs. Marland: In rising this morning to speak to my Bill 41, I must say at the outset that this could be a little place in history for the Ontario Legislature this morning, primarily because, through my own personal experience in the riding of Mississauga South, we have discovered that we have a very serious problem with rusty water.

I have dealt with the problem at the local municipal level and subsequently had a meeting in my office with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment officials, including Dennis Caplice, the assistant deputy minister, along with the ward councillor for that part of Mississauga, Harold Kennedy, who is also the region of Peel councillor for the area; Don Markle, who is the commissioner of public works for the region of Peel; and Rick Anderson, who is president of the Applewood Homeowners' Association and who indeed is the president of the ratepayers' group for the area where a part of the problem lies.

Having addressed the local introduction for me to this particular subject, I want now to address the fact that this is not a local problem by any means. I would like to show what rusty water looks like in Mississauga South. This is a sample of the kind of water that is coming through some of the pipes in some of the homes in two or three parts of south Mississauga.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: That's whisky, Margaret.

Mrs. Marland: As a matter of fact, I will send it over with the page to the member for York North (Mr. Sorbara). He might like to see what this rusty water looks like.

In recognizing that this is indeed a very serious problem, we also have to recognize that to the home owners, in the case of the people who experience this problem, it is not just a matter of turning on the tap and receiving something that obviously is not healthy-looking or appetizing-looking. We are assured by the local department of health that there is no health hazard to the water and that the water is tested regularly.

However, there is a real economic cost to those people who have this problem, and for that reason I will now show members an undershirt. It is certainly not a common sight in the Ontario Legislature. It is an undershirt which at one time was white. It is now brown and has very heavy rust stains in it. This shirt was sent to me by one of my constituents, and I am very sympathetic to the economic cost for a family which has this kind of problem with the laundry. Obviously, nobody wants to wear underwear or any other garment that looks like that.

The problem is not new; it is not new in terms of perhaps the last five years particularly. It is not a problem that has not been identified and recognized. Unfortunately, however, it is a problem for which the remedy has yet to be provided. The remedy is a tremendous financial cost. Certainly, the deteriorating condition of Ontario's water and sewer infrastructure is increasingly well documented. The Canadian Federation of Municipalities has called for an expenditure of \$14 billion over the next five years to correct the situation.

In fact, infrastructure rehabilitation, which of course also includes transportation systems in terms of highways and roads, has become the political buzzword of the year with both the federal and provincial governments paying lip-service to the problem, but neither is willing to accept responsibility or to commit funds. Infrastructure rehabilitation is a problem of today and tomorrow. We are a young province. Our emphasis in the past has been on development and growth. However, we must now turn our attention towards maintaining the standard of living and the standard of service that we have built over the past many decades.

A fund to assist municipalities in developing an inventory of needs is not enough. My

constituents cannot, nor should they be expected to, wait. In Mississauga, the councillors and elected representatives are all too familiar with the concerns of the new mother who fears washing her infant in rusty, discoloured water. We hear daily and at public meetings the horrors of damaged laundry and ruined household articles. In fact, there is quite an expense to bathroom fixtures, as well, in some of these homes.

In the region of Peel, there are some 275 kilometres of old, iron water lines that need replacing because they are rusting out. The cost of replacement is estimated at \$50 million in the region of Peel alone, yet we know it will be considerably higher if the rehabilitation program is delayed.

Our local government—the city of Mississauga and the region of Peel—on the front line, has acknowledged its responsibility and allocated \$6 million for upgrading of water lines in 1987, a hefty commitment in spite of a decreasing share of the tax pie that regional governments must work with.

1010

Quite simply, the provincial government must stop the buck-passing and make a contribution. Rehabilitation must become a focus of established public policy. This bill will bring the issue into the Ontario Legislature, as it does today for second reading. It is time this debate began. My constituents, as well as the constituents of every member of this Legislature, have a right to clean water.

I recognize that my bill will have the support of the government today, since in the throne speech it made a very clear commitment to resolving the problem. I am referring to page 24 in the throne speech under the heading, "A Safe Environment." I will quote from this throne speech:

"Ontario's sewage and water distribution systems represent an investment of \$30 billion. We will provide enriched support to help municipalities maintain and rehabilitate sewage and water distribution systems, and protect our beaches, lakes, rivers and water supplies. Funds will be provided for projects such as sewage systems improvements, sewer separation, beach cleanup, pollution control plans and agricultural erosion control."

I was particularly happy to see that paragraph in the throne speech of a few weeks ago, recognizing that the current government is now ready to deal with the problem, in spite of the fact that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has said in the past that he could not

make progress in resolving this problem because the federal government was not in the position that it was willing to have anything to do with it.

I was also happy to see, under "Environment" on page 13 of the budget which was presented in this Legislature last week, that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) had also addressed the problem. In the presentation of his budget, the Treasurer told us:

"Deteriorating water and sewer systems throughout the province must be rebuilt before they require even more costly replacement. To determine the extent and urgency of this problem, \$14 million is being made available over the next three years, to assist municipalities in undertaking detailed assessments of the condition of their facilities."

In addressing the fact that the government has allocated \$14 million for municipalities to assess the condition of their facilities, I would like to say that in the region of Peel that assessment has been done. In the region of Peel, as I said a few minutes ago, we know how much is needed in terms of mileage over these rusty water lines. We also know very well how much money that would cost. We do not need more money to go away and simply count our pipes. We have done that.

I recognize that there will be some municipalities around the province that have yet to make that assessment, but I am also aware, through a submission of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, that AMO has recognized, through all its member municipalities, that the municipal funding of replacement of infrastructure is simply not possible without help from the provincial government.

When, for people to have clean water, it requires an added expenditure in some parts of the province as opposed to some other parts, then we are not dealing with equity for our constituents. In fact, I have a constituent who spent in excess of \$250 to have a water treatment system put in his house, but the cost does not end there. This water treatment system requires filtering. It is a process of filtering and it requires filters. I understand these filters normally last anywhere from three to four months; in this home, they last about 21 days.

A new filter in this home is white. Within 21 days, that white filter becomes pure brown rust in colour. As we look at the two filters, we recognize how severe the problem is in that particular house. It is also a severity financially, because these filters cost about \$38 a pair and you use two at a time. So that house is spending \$38 every 21 days simply on filtering out the major

chunks of rust in the home—not the fine rust, but the kind that is in this kind of water.

At this point, I will reserve my six minutes and 49 seconds until the end of the debate.

Mr. Foulds: I rise to support this bill in a spirit of generosity and fairness this morning. I have some reservations about the touching faith that the member shows in the Lieutenant Governor in Council. I am actually quite amazed that the bill is, if I may use the phrase, as wishy-washy as it is and as tentative. It is uncharacteristic of the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) to be as tentative as she is in this bill.

First, if I could just look at the first section of the bill, she leaves it to the Lieutenant Governor in Council to name the minister to supervise the act. Obviously, it should be the Minister of the Environment. Obviously, St. Bradley does not have enough on his plate as it is and needs another—

Mr. Martel: St. James.

Mr. Foulds: St. James Bradley, that is. He needs another piece of legislation to keep him busy commuting from St. Clair Avenue to the Ontario Legislature.

Second, I have some problems with section 5 of the bill, where the member indicates that “the minister shall offer the municipality whatever assistance it requires in developing a plan to determine how most efficiently to effect appropriate rehabilitation of that water delivery system.” That is a very difficult term to define in law, “whatever assistance it requires.” I hope the member will be able to indicate more clearly, in regulations that she can put forward in her windup this morning, what assistance she feels the municipalities require.

Then in section 7, I do not want to use the term too harshly, but I really feel the member lets the government and the minister off the hook. She says, “Where the minister considers it appropriate to do so, the minister may provide grants or loans to municipalities to assist them in rehabilitating water delivery systems.” I think we should have a much more clear-cut definition of what is an appropriate water delivery system, because I believe very strongly that section 4 and section 7 of the member’s bill are very important and worth while. For those two sections alone, I shall support the bill.

I believe that clean water is the crucial issue of the 20th century. I am afraid this bill deals with a very minor and small proportion of the problem.

1020

If society as a whole does not come to the understanding that both air and water are

necessary for it to survive; and if society, particularly in the the industrialized nations of the world, does not realize that we can no longer afford to continue to pollute these God-given things that ensure our species’ survival, then the species will not survive. It is as simple and as direct as that.

I am afraid the fact that the member is concerned about beige underwear does not really come to the heart of the issue. I think we need to look seriously at the state of our water delivery systems throughout the whole province, as the member indicates. I think we need to have an annual report by the Minister of the Environment to this Legislature about the state of those water delivery systems.

Merely upgrading those water delivery systems does not solve the fundamental problem of the pollution of our water. We have to stop the pollution at source. Obviously, we need to upgrade the filtration systems, the infrastructure in our municipalities, in order to ensure clean water for most of our urban centres, but we also need to look at the supply of clean water throughout the province.

With respect to the member for Mississauga South, where was her party during the crisis of the pollution of the English-Wabigoon river system back in the early 1970s? Where was her party in the crisis of the asbestos contamination of Lake Superior in the 1970s? Where was her party in the last parliament when it came to the pollution of our water systems throughout this province with polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxins and other toxic chemicals?

I believe it is the toxicity of the chemical pollution of our water systems that is a far more urgent and far more crucial issue than the problem of beige underwear in Mississauga. I believe this is a very serious topic. I believe the subject is of utmost importance. If I may say so, I am a trifle worried that the member’s approach has trivialized a very important issue.

But, as I say, I will support the bill and I would urge members to support the bill and put it in committee for some very tough amendments to upgrade and enhance this bill. I will support the bill, as I said, because of section 4 and section 7 in the act. I believe it is the first step to action to have a thorough and proper accounting, if you like, a listing of the facilities in the province and the state they are in.

That principle is, I think, a principle we endorsed in this party when we talked about forestry in this province. We felt the first step to getting a proper rehabilitation of the forests, a

proper reforestation program going, was to get a proper accounting of what was available in our forests. Similarly, what we need in the province is a proper accounting of what our water delivery systems are like.

But fundamentally, as I said, we need to tackle the problem of pollution at source. We need to stop the polluters and we need to start making the polluters pay; and pay not merely in fines, which is simply a licence to continue to pollute, but pay by rehabilitating their internal systems so that they do not discharge toxic chemicals into our water systems.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I had not really intended to participate in this debate, but I really could not resist being here this morning. Having had a chance to analyse the bill, Bill 41, An Act to encourage the Rehabilitation of Water Delivery Systems in Ontario. I want to congratulate the member for Mississauga South for introducing the bill, but I just wonder, as my friend the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) wondered, whether the bill really captured what needs to be undertaken in this province in respect of clean water.

The member for Mississauga South, the sponsor of the bill, gave not a dry speech, a very good speech, in support of her bill. I do not want to say that she was all wet in her bill—

Mr. Martel: Ohhhh.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: —on rehabilitating the water systems, but I tell my friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) that there were demonstrations in this House by the member for Mississauga South, who talked about those poor people in Mississauga who are suffering the heartbreak of rusty undershirts. I am glad that my friend from Mississauga South, in respect of the decorum that this House must maintain, did not bring in other items of underwear to illustrate the problem.

She did, though, pass me a jar of Mississauga water, which is indeed full of rust. Generally, what we used to do when we had this problem is run the tap for a little while. The problem developed because the water had been standing in the pipes for a very long time. By the way, the water at Queen's Park is not full of rust because we drink a lot of it in the House and there is no rust there at all.

My friend gave a good speech in support of her bill. I thought she would use some literary references. There are all sorts of great literary references. I thought she might say that in Mississauga there was, "Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink." All of it is in the

washing machines ruining the undershirts of the province and, indeed, the nation, but she did whet my appetite and encourage me to say a few words.

I want to encourage the member with her bill, because the essence of the bill is very important. The issues that are raised, although skirted around in typical Conservative fashion, do suggest certain problems that I think we need to address as a parliament in a province that is industrialized to the point where issues relating to clean water and clean air are crucial to our future.

My friend from Port Arthur spoke to those issues and I think he made a couple of very important points. Unfortunately, this bill does not speak directly to the key issue and that is, what is the quality of the water going into these rusty pipes? Surely, the matter of infrastructure that my friend from Mississauga South points out is important.

There are millions and billions of dollars worth of infrastructure in the ground and in the air, joining us up in so many ways electronically, with gas pipelines from western Canada that are deteriorating, sewage pipelines which take the sewage to the sewage treatment plants on our waterways. All of that infrastructure is important, but the key issue for a post-industrial economy is and has to do with what is going into the system. What is the quality of our air and our water?

My friend from Mississauga South suggests that the minister, whoever is chosen by the Lieutenant Governor, should make an annual report, suggesting that the minister should report on the status of water delivery systems throughout the province. That is a good idea, but surely we should go further than that if we really want to tackle the problem.

I recall that one of our colleagues in the House of Commons in Ottawa, a friend of mine, Charles Caccia, who is the federal member for Davenport, wrote an article that appeared a couple of years ago.

1030

Mr. Grande: He is in trouble now.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: A Liberal member, I tell my friend the member for Oakwood. He wrote a very important article in the *Toronto Star* in which he suggested that the true solution in terms of pollution is that industries in this province must adopt the mentality of, "If it is clean going in, it has to be clean coming out." That is the kind of situation we have to have. That is the kind of infrastructure we have to develop in this province, particularly in the industries. Frankly, we

do not have that yet. We do not have a society, an economy, an industrial base that has adopted that sort of notion as the fundamental principle of utilization of our natural resources.

My friend the member for Mississauga South talks about the rust in the pipes in Mississauga. The issue she is talking about, clean water, is going to be crucial to this province, this nation and this continent over the next many years. Water used to be considered a commodity that was everywhere. I remember learning in grade 3 science that it was the universal solvent. It was to be found everywhere. Back in those days, we did not really consider that it was threatened in any way, that the precious natural resource was threatened by what we see today as severe challenges from a very highly industrialized economy.

Now, in a kind of North American post-industrial economy, we see great pressures on our water system. We see the southern part of the United States experiencing dramatic shortages in water. Are they going to be coming to Ontario? Are they going to be coming to Canada to look for new supplies of fresh water? It is a very important issue.

Mr. Foulds: If Ronald Reagan has his way, yes.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend the member for Port Arthur says, "If Ronald Reagan has his way, yes."

Mr. Foulds: And Tom Kierans.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: And Tom Kierans.

It is something we all have to think about and be concerned about. This is a very precious commodity. We must treat it very seriously, not only in the pipes of Mississauga, where there appears to be a little bit of rust, but also throughout this province, in the north and throughout the country.

Mr. Grande: You are minimizing the problem.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend the member for Oakwood says I am minimizing the problems. I do not think so. I think perhaps my friend from Mississauga South has restricted her concern in her bill to too narrow a problem and has not gone beyond the problems of dirty laundry in Mississauga and the cost of a \$21 water filter. Certainly, infrastructure has to be dealt with, but I think there will come a time very soon in this province when we have to take an entirely fresh approach to how we are going to protect this very precious resource.

I live on a farm just outside Maple where, 80 years ago, the farmer who preceded me on that farm was able to dig about 20 feet into the ground and find fresh, clean water that he could pump up by hand. The pump still sits in my backyard, and it still works, by the way. He could be guaranteed that the water was clean, fresh, potable and usable. He could wash and bathe in it, cook his vegetables in it, give it to his children and give it to his cattle. That same water in that same hole is no longer drinkable, no longer usable.

The water I use in Maple is now pumped up from Lake Ontario, which is not all that great a situation. It has all kinds of chemicals in it. It has too much chlorine in it.

The member from Port Arthur suggests we will do away with the species if we are not careful, if we do not protect this resource. I think he gives it a little bit too high a concern. I do not think we are about to poison ourselves and wipe the species off the face of the earth, but it is a very important issue.

I am glad this bill is before the House and I want to indicate to my friend from Mississauga South that I congratulate her on the bill. I thank her for her bottle of rusty Mississauga water. I thought she would add a little something else to it. I did not try drinking it. It does not look very appetizing.

I want to indicate that I support her initiative and I hope, in her desire to bring cleaner water and cleaner laundry to Mississauga, that the tide is turning and that we will, under the guidance of my colleague the Minister of the Environment be in for some very good times in this province as far as the environment and the quality of water are concerned.

Mr. Gillies: I am very pleased to join this debate this morning on the bill put before the House by my colleague the member for Mississauga South. I am delighted that my colleague has taken this very worthwhile and practical initiative, which I will be pleased to support and which I hope all members of the House will be pleased to support.

I listened with some interest to the comments made a few moments ago by my friend the Minister of Colleges and Universities. While I am pleased to hear of his support for the bill, I was drawn to the comment my friend made, that he felt my colleague had restricted the focus of her bill too greatly. I would like to talk about that, because if my friend will accept a little criticism—not personal, but in a general sense—I think the speech we just heard is very indicative of the

approach to a number of issues taken by this Liberal government.

The Liberal approach is to express a lot of anguish and concern about the generalities of whatever the issue before the House is—in this case, the quality of water—but not to offer any practical solutions as to what should be done. No practical solutions at all are offered by our friends in the government, whereas the very specific bill put before the House by my colleague the member for Mississauga South does indeed offer some practical solutions.

The whole question of the deterioration of our water delivery and sewage systems in this province, the whole question of the maintenance of those systems, is one of the more pressing issues we have to face as a Legislature. I think the members would agree it is not a particularly sexy issue. The public does not, generally speaking, get in a lather over the deterioration of a system which is under their feet and is not readily visible.

We can all get concerned about potholes and the quality of our roads, as well we should, but we have an equally extensive and equally expensive infrastructure underground which also has need of our attention. As my colleague has pointed out, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has expressed great concern over the condition of this infrastructure and feels that nationally, in the coming years, we could see required an expenditure in the billions of dollars.

Certainly, the infrastructure under our feet in Ontario is estimated to be worth something more than \$20 billion, and yet we do not see anywhere near the kind of commitment that is needed to maintain or improve that system.

In the recent budget, we heard the Treasurer say he was going to make available several million dollars to study the problem, to do an inventory of sewer and water systems in the province and determine where the problems are. I would suggest to the members of the governing party that is not what is required right now at all. A study has already been done—the minister is well aware of this—by the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association and it has already put forward its estimate of the scope of the problem. The association said the problem is estimated to require something in the region of \$150 million or \$160 million a year for the next 60 years. Effectively, what they are really telling us is that the problem is going to require in the neighbourhood of \$150 million or \$160 million a year for the foreseeable future, because 60 years down the road the whole system will have to be

revamped and we will be pretty well starting all over again.

We are not seeing anywhere near that kind of commitment and that kind of push from the government. When the member for Mississauga South brings in a very practical measure to address one part of that problem, I believe it is worthy of our support. Let us be very clear about the purpose of the member's bill. She is talking about measures to promote and assist the rehabilitation of water delivery systems. That is part of the overall infrastructure problem which, of course, includes the sewage systems too.

She is talking about investigation of the need for rehabilitation, but more important she is talking about assistance to municipalities in determining effectively how to rehabilitate their own systems, she is talking about practical financial assistance to the municipalities involved to reach that goal.

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The reason this is important can be readily identified if one looks at a number of communities in the province. The one I am going to make reference to is the town of Fort Erie. The member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty) is not here, but I am sure he shares my concern that there is a situation there in which the municipality is really caught in a double bind. The double bind is this: that municipality has a sewer system that is completely incapable of meeting the requirements for treating the sewage generated by that town. Indeed, whenever it rains—three or four times a month on average—the sewer system overflows and there are discharges of raw sewage from the town of Fort Erie into the lake.

The problem Fort Erie has, and I use this as an example, is that because of this problem the Minister of the Environment has effectively put a moratorium on further development of that community. In other words, except in extraordinary circumstances we are not seeing new buildings, new developments and new sources of tax revenue going up in and around Fort Erie. At the same time, the Minister of the Environment and this government are not willing to put forward the kind of dollar commitment required for them to correct the problem.

I am sure the problem becomes readily apparent. We have a municipality that effectively cannot grow, so it cannot generate the kind of local taxation it needs to try to meet the need, and at the same time it is not getting the assistance from this government that it needs to correct the problem.

I was in Fort Erie several weeks ago. I met with the mayor and some of his officials. As Environment critic for our party, I can say that they are very frustrated indeed. They want to work with the government to correct the problem but they are not getting the assistance they need.

This is the kind of practical assistance my colleague the member for Mississauga South is talking about. This is the kind of practical dollar commitment my friend is talking about. If, in terms of sewer and watermain rehabilitation and providing clean water for our citizens, we are talking of a commitment of \$150 million or \$160 million a year for the foreseeable future, then so be it. This government has the money. The Treasurer has recently opened the books. We have seen his budgetary plan for the coming year. They on the other side of the floor cannot argue that they do not have the money, because of course they do; they have a budgetary surplus. Where better could we use it than in ensuring we supply clean water to our citizens?

One thing the preceding speaker said with which I would have to agree was that the water quality issues my friend is addressing in her bill are very complex. We are talking about water discharge, about the purity of water being discharged back into the system and about the quality of water being taken into the system. With that premise, I agree. The municipal-industrial sewage abatement program currently being put into effect by the Ministry of the Environment is a small step towards the treatment of municipal sewage and waste such that we have cleaner water going back into our lakes and rivers prior to its being used by other municipalities and other people. But that too is flawed.

I will be proposing to the House in the near future a resolution that I believe is a companion resolution and is complementary to that put forward by my colleague the member for Mississauga South. It is based on this, and I will say this by way of conclusion: the program currently in effect under the Ministry of the Environment regulates only those 300 pollution sources that are dumping directly into our lakes, rivers and streams; about 300 industrial sources of that type of pollution. Members of the House should be aware that there are some 13,000 sources of industrial pollution that are not dumping directly into our waters but are dumping into the municipal sewage treatment facilities.

I believe, and I will be proposing to the House, that those sources of pollution should also be regulated. They should be cleaning up their act prior to passing along the problem to our

municipal sewer systems. I think that, coupled with the clean water initiative proposed by my colleague, would put us much further ahead on the whole issue of water quality in our province.

Mr. Grande: I am happy to rise in support of Bill 41, which is the bill of the member for Mississauga South. I understand from other members who have spoken before that one of our concerns, a major concern, should be in terms of how clean the water is prior to getting in the pipes. Obviously, we must do everything possible to make sure that the toxic substances in the water are taken out and that the water is filtered and filtered well before it goes into the pipes for distribution to the homes of people of this province.

That is one issue, a very important issue. The second issue, which is just as important, is what is the quality of water the people in our province and in our municipalities get out of their taps? That is important because what the people see is the water as it comes out of their taps, the water that is supposed to be water that they can drink.

The member for Mississauga South sent me as well a bottle with reddish water in it. I guess if you disturb it, that water will become redder. There is rust in there. There is no doubt.

I brought along my own bottle. This bottle of water comes from a home in the riding of Oakwood. If I show the members this bottle, they will see there is a darkish sediment in it. If I were to disturb this darkish sediment, they would find that this whole bottle turns black—virtually black.

I am not going to suggest or leave the impression in the minds of the members of the Legislature that this is the way the water in the riding of Oakwood comes 24 hours a day. Far from me to do that, because it is not true. The problem is that this kind of water comes out of the taps of the people of the riding of Oakwood more often than I or they want this kind of water to come through our taps.

The distribution system in the part of the city of York I represent in this Legislature is at least 60 to 70 years of age. The watermains have indeed deteriorated. What we have been finding in the last four years is that more and more of this kind of problem is occurring. This should tell us, it should tell the municipality, it should tell the provincial level of government and it should tell the federal level of government that some money, some dough, has to be put in, to rehabilitate if it is possible, or to replace that water distribution system.

The problem is that the provincial level of government appears to be interested, saying:

"Well, we will give you some money, municipalities, to study the needs you have. You can go for the next three to four years and study your needs." But the federal level of government has discontinued support to the municipality for this kind of function, for the rehabilitation of sewage and watermains. The members will remember, of course, that Tom McMillan, the federal Minister of the Environment, has said: "We do not have a dime for that. It is not our responsibility. It is the responsibility of the provincial level of government and the municipality."

I just want to suggest to the members that that kind of attitude coming from the federal government is certainly not going to help us in Ontario, and the people of the riding of Oakwood and the city of York in particular, to do something about resolving this problem; which is a nuisance more than anything else but it is there. Four or five times a year, if not more, this occurs in almost every home in the riding of Oakwood.

The problem is simple. The water distribution system in some of our municipalities is too old and needs to be replaced. We need a lot of money for that. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has said we need at least \$14 billion across Canada to do that; in Ontario, \$6 billion.

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I would hope that the member for Mississauga South, whose bill I will support, will be able to talk to the Minister of the Environment at the federal level and say: "Come on, Tom, change your mind. We need some money. We need some dollars to come to our municipalities in order to do that. Do not just shrug it off and say it is not a federal responsibility." People pay taxes to the federal level of government and people deserve those services.

The provincial level of government also has to make a commitment, and the commitment to conduct a study is not good enough in areas such as the city of York, where the water distribution system has deteriorated to the extent that millions of dollars have to be spent.

Last, the city of York does not have the tax base to generate the kinds of funds needed to provide or to rehabilitate those services. It just does not have the base. I do not know how many times I have to get up in this Legislature and say so, whether to the Minister of the Environment, to the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton), to the Treasurer, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grand-maitre), or to whichever minister. The city of York does not have the tax base to be able to raise

the money to provide these services to its residents. As a result of that, the provincial level of government has to come through with funding so our services can be as good as—as good as—other places in Metropolitan Toronto.

The water distribution system has to be looked after. We do want Mr. McMillan at the federal level, and the Minister of the Environment at the provincial level, and the municipality—the mayor of the city of York in the particular instance I am talking to you about—to get together and say: "Look, there is a problem here. Let us put our heads together, let us put our moneys together, and let us get on and solve that problem."

In solving that problem, we also create a lot of jobs, and we lessen the unemployment problem that is there.

I would say to the member who brought forward Bill 41 that I will support the bill. I would have hoped the member could have been a little stronger in terms of the contents of this bill. In some municipalities, we have passed the point of encouragement or study. Our services, particularly in terms of water and sewage treatment, have deteriorated to the point where they have to be replaced. We need to have the money to do that; we need the federal level of government and the provincial level of government to work together with the municipality in order to provide those services for residents in our municipalities.

It does us no good for the federal level of government to be saying, "We are not interested." It does us no good for the provincial level of government to be telling us, "Because the federal level of government is not interested we are not going to get involved in it."

There are indeed very serious problems in the municipality, and we need the support of every level of government in order to accomplish our goal, which is clean water for the residents in our municipalities. It is one of the things we take for granted, but when I see this kind of water coming out of the taps of the riding of Oakwood, I say we cannot take it for granted any more. We need to do a lot of work, and we must get on with the job immediately.

Mrs. Marland: I am sorry the member for York North has left, because I was looking forward to telling him that simply running the water through these taps does not resolve the problems. He suggested they let the water run. In fact, when residents of Mississauga South let the water run, that is when they get large amounts of rust at one time and it does not improve the situation. In fact, it impedes the situation even more. Obviously, rust is not a problem only in

Mississauga and that is why this bill is before the House today.

I would like to address the fact that the Minister of the Environment, in January 1986, which is about 17 months ago now, did acknowledge that the problem exists. Here again, I thought if the member for York North had been here he would have benefited from knowing this. This is not to do with the quality of water from the aspect he was arguing it but rather from the point of view of this bill. In his speech in January 1986, the Minister of the Environment said:

"Now, though, because of ageing systems, preventive maintenance and rehabilitation must become a priority. I assure you that I will do all I can to see that this happens. From where I stand, there is very little choice in the matter. We pay for rehabilitation of our municipal infrastructure now, or we pay greater costs down the road. The cost of inaction includes a deteriorating environment and increased health risk.

"In some cases, watermain will suffer from calcium buildup. Ground water will become contaminated by sewage system leaks. Sewage treatment facilities will be overloaded by inflow and infiltration problems associated with old and outmoded combined sewer systems."

The minister goes on to say:

"Acting now will save Canada and the provinces billions and billions of dollars. Acting later means, in effect, that we are squandering the efforts, funds and goodwill that built our current water-related systems by allowing them to fall into a state of irreversible disrepair. There is also an argument to be made that any federal funds which go into infrastructure rehabilitation will be paid back in spades through job creation and economic stimulation.

"The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has issued a report demonstrating just that. The report, called *Work, Work, Work*, shows that an investment in public works carried with it the maximum multiplier effect. The report argues that improving the country's essential infrastructure improves its ability to grow and prosper."

I would suggest that all those benefits that were addressed in that paragraph from the federal perspective of our nation certainly have to apply from the provincial perspective of Ontario. While the minister addresses the fact that to have these projects put in jeopardy by a lack of federal funding is unfortunate, he also goes on to say, "Delay in infrastructure rehabilitation on economic grounds is an extremely unsound argument."

I could not support the minister's comments any more strongly than he has stated them. However, in making that statement, the minister has to recognize that these federal programs to which he referred, which now no longer exist, were not dismantled by the Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa but rather were dismantled before its term in office by the federal Liberal government in Ottawa.

While we now know that speech was made in January 1986 by the Minister of the Environment, and those were remarks to the Ontario chapter of the American Public Works Association, we know that almost a year and one month later, on February 5, 1987, in comments made by the Honourable Tom McMillan to the first Canadian Conference on Urban Infrastructure, he said, "Let me begin by ending the suspense for you and for me. The federal government does not intend to restore previously dismantled municipal programs."

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I think it is important to recognize that it was the Liberal government that dismantled those programs and, in fact, those programs did not address the need that is addressed by this bill in the Legislature today. Those programs for funding infrastructure were for new construction only, not for rehabilitation. There has never been a funding program for rehabilitation and replacement of infrastructure in this country. That is why this bill is so important in the Legislature today.

Since we now know that the federal government is not in a position to replace even the new construction, I think it is time that in Ontario we discontinued this cop-out approach where we say, "We will do it if they do it," and, as a result, my residents in Mississauga South and the residents of all the members of all ridings in this province, if they do not face this problem today, certainly will be facing it in the near future.

Since I was asked by the member for Port Arthur why this bill did not go further, I would like to tell him that when this bill is in the committee, it will be able to be fine-tuned. The purpose of my moving this bill in the first place was to do what was needed, that is, to bring this whole subject into the public forum. We recognize the abilities of the members of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to help negotiate what the terms of the bill will be in order to address their problem.

It is with pleasure that I move this bill to the standing committee on resources development. I

look for the unanimous support of this House, as it is a problem for every member of this House.

TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES

Mr. McCaffrey moved resolution 9:

That in the opinion of this House the federal government's initiatives to negotiate a bilateral trading arrangement with the United States should be supported as part of the government's multilateral trade policy, while protecting our political sovereignty, social programs, agricultural marketing systems, the auto industry and our unique cultural identity; and further that this House believes that the provincial government must take a more active role in the development of Canada's trade strategy and the trade negotiations, including clearly putting forward Ontario's position with respect to this issue of importance to all Canadians.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr. McCaffrey: I will be very brief. The substance of this resolution is almost identical to a similar resolution recently discussed in the House of Commons. What I want to do today in particular is provide an opportunity for two of my colleagues, the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden) and the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson), to add some very substantive and specific matters as they apply to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the whole question of tariff reduction. The member for Eglinton will be giving some trade figures and the member for Durham-York will discuss in some detail, time permitting, some agricultural impacts of this resolution.

The thrust of the resolution I think is clear. We want to see this government be far more definitive in where it stands on this broad issue of free trade. There is nobody in this assembly who does not understand the politics of appearing to be going slowly, appearing to be going thoughtfully and appearing to be protecting the manufacturing base and other business interests in this province. There is a century of history to that position.

I want, though, to give one example of where I think this government has been unusually creative and I encourage it to carry that same innovative thrust through to other matters of the trade talks. Periodically, governments do things that reflect what I will call global realities. If I may give one specific example, in the securities industry, an industry I know a little bit about, we

have in effect something nearly approaching a free trade market right now. That is the global reality of the securities business and indeed of the whole question of the financial industry.

Money moves with ease from country to country. Investors move with ease from country to country. Securities are increasingly being listed on all the world stock exchanges, whatever their country of origin. In our own country, some of our principal and major industrial companies such as Bell Canada and a number of our banks are listed and will be trading today on the Tokyo stock exchange. It is an example of a trend that in my judgement will accelerate.

About three months ago this government, through the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter), took what I think was a very courageous, creative and gutsy move in fundamentally changing the ownership provisions of the securities industry in this jurisdiction. Its impact will be felt throughout the country. What it boils down to is that the minister, with the encouragement and support of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), ruled that, as of June this year, foreigners may own up to 50 per cent of a Canadian securities dealer and that by June 1988, just a year down the road, foreigners will be able to own, control and operate 100 per cent of a Canadian-based securities dealer.

It is a creative move. By the way, it is a move that is still causing some debate in the industry, but in my judgement, it is a move that reflects the global realities of that industry and recognizes at the same time that if we are going to be able to survive as a securities and financial community, we have to be able to compete on the world level. It goes without saying that there is sufficient confidence that Canadians can compete internationally. Scores of businesses are doing it today, and I think the government simply needs to have the confidence to be able to move ahead.

Before turning this over to my colleagues, I encourage the government to be a little more candid, up front and courageous and to show the same kind of leadership in other areas of this trading question that has been shown in the securities area. It should have the confidence in Canadian entrepreneurs and business leaders that we all have. The reality is that if we do not face these global realities, we are going to be in trouble. We have no alternative but to face the international competition that Canadians can match.

Mr. Mackenzie: I rise with interest to take part in this debate on the resolution that has been moved by my friend and colleague the member

for Armourdale (Mr. McCaffrey). I find a little bit of an air of unreality to the resolution he has moved in this House. The motion says, "That in the opinion of this House the federal government's initiatives to negotiate a bilateral trading arrangement with the United States should be supported." That is fairly clear. It is probably the key to what we are debating here, except for one other item and that is the last section, "clearly putting forward Ontario's position with respect to this issue of importance to all Canadians."

Those are the key words as far as I am concerned in resolution 9 that has been presented to the House today. The problem we have is that if we buy endorsing the federal initiative, we are talking about—because they have never backed off it—a comprehensive, bilateral trading agreement between Canada and the United States, a trading agreement that starts from a level playing field, that establishes so-called equality between the two parties and that supposedly will be a win-win situation for both sides in the talks.

That is just not likely. We are not only dealing with the numbers—a country of almost 26 million people against a country of 240 million to 250 million people—we are also dealing with an industrial base on the other side of the river that can swamp almost any one of our industries at any time it wants. We are dealing with farm legislation right now that we simply cannot, in most cases, compete with. We are dealing with a US commitment to protect its countervail legislation, which means that an action can be brought at any time if somebody is being unfairly hurt in the United States.

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The effort to get around that opening sentence is in the remarks that follow—this is why I say it is almost a trip into fairyland—which say, "while protecting our political sovereignty, social programs, agricultural marketing systems, the auto industry and our unique cultural identity." I do not know how much more evidence we need than what we have had from Mr. Yeutter and Mr. Murphy in terms of these very items having to be on the table. There is no way we are not going to negotiate some of these items.

I will take a piece out of the *Toronto Star*, if I can, that has been reiterated a number of times since. These are comments that Mr. Yeutter was making. I am quoting from the *Toronto Star* of December 19:

"I would be concerned if the term 'culture' is defined in such a way that it could have a major dampening effect on the overall negotiating process. I would certainly hope and expect that

Prime Minister Mulroney and Minister Kelleher and others will take a reasonable, rational view of that issue. While it is seen as premature to exempt cultural industries before talks get under way, Ottawa could always do so during the formal negotiations."

Significantly, Mr. Yeutter suggested in the same speech that Canada would have to make tradeoffs with the US if it wanted to protect these sensitive cultural industries. Is the member saying that we will deal as long as these things are exempt and not accepting the fact that, by putting these items on the table, we are going to have to make tradeoffs? That does not make any sense to me. He goes on further to say, "The argument over cultural industries can be thrashed out only at the bargaining table."

I will leave that one for a moment and talk about the auto pact, which is essential to the jobs of literally hundreds of thousands of people in Ontario. These are Mr. Yeutter's comments, not mine. This was reinforced by Mr. Murphy and by a number of other Americans on a number of occasions since. "Asked at his news conference about the auto pact, which has regulated trade in cars and parts between the two countries since the 1960s and now yields a surplus for Canada, Yeutter argued that it must be included in free trade talks." Mr. Murphy has said exactly the same thing.

I want to know from my colleague in the House if that is now all right. We can go into any one of the other areas that really concern us, some of the farm products, a number of the other industries, but is it all right now that we negotiate with those on the table and make our tradeoffs accordingly? Or is he saying in his resolution that those things have to be exempted and from there we are going to sit down and talk? I submit they are two entirely different things. It starts us out not in a win-win position but in an absolutely no-win-no-win position in this country of ours.

I know the concerns of working people. I know some of the concerns of business. There were almost as many business people, probably more, before our committee when we were holding the hearings. I will not go into the details of the trucking industry or a number of others. They outlined in graphic detail the concerns they had.

I also want to go back to this last statement he made, "clearly putting forward Ontario's position with respect to this issue of importance to all Canadians." On that item, I can agree with him. I would like to know what Ontario's position is. I

would like to know what this Liberal government's position is in terms of free trade.

I know what the position of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is. He is on record fairly clearly as favouring the whole idea. I know the position taken on some of the arguments, all the while qualifying that the government also did not want to deal with these certain items that would really hurt us. The position that was taken by Liberal members in that committee on the free trade initiative was that they were in favour of it, provided we could somehow qualify it; but never answered was that qualification that we do not deal with those items or that we do put them on the table and make sure we negotiate protection on those particular items. In the course of doing so, what are the tradeoffs?

There are obviously tradeoffs any time one puts major items like the auto pact, like culture, like a number of other industries on the bargaining table. There are obviously tradeoffs. The thing that has bothered me in this whole argument is exactly where Ontario and the Liberal government stand as we start getting down to the short strokes in the trade negotiations that we are in in Washington now. Quite frankly, I do not know where they stand. I do not know how much grit and determination is going to be there in terms of protecting some of these things.

The minute we enter in and endorse the trade talks that we are now being asked to reinforce with this resolution, except with all the qualifications, somebody has to tell us clearly what those qualifications mean and whether or not they mean those are not on the table, period; or do they mean that they are on the table but we will do the trading off that is necessary to protect ourselves in those particular areas? If that is the argument that is being made here, then we are in a no-win position before we even start in these comprehensive trade negotiations.

When my colleague also says, "We have a history of protecting our industrial base in this country"—and there are certain industries that we cannot let go down the tube—I go back to the same question: Do we put them on the table and let something else go back down the tube in the course of the negotiations? It does not make any sense. This particular resolution that is before us has an air of real unreality.

Certainly, I and my colleagues cannot support it, much as we would like to know what Ontario's position is and much as we think we probably should be having more of a voice in this because Ontario has more to lose. We certainly do not endorse the type of initiative that was presented

to us that said we were not going to lose these particular items in our country. But every single day that goes by, when we listen to the trade negotiators, the US ambassador, their senior people, when we talked to the senators in the United States, it was made very clear that all the things we are talking about exempting were on the table.

I say to the members of this House that it does not make any sense at all. Our position should be much more forthright and clear as to what we want, and it certainly is not to see the continuation of this particular federal initiative of Mr. Mulroney which, incidentally, he entered into without any predebate in this country, entered into from a position of saying he opposed it when he was running for the leadership and really tried to pull a fast one without a clear consensus among the Canadian people as to what they were trying to do. My party will be opposing this resolution.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I rise with a little sorrow. I recall meeting the member for Armourdale in 1985 when I first was elected to this assembly and I recall receiving some excellent advice from him as to how to conduct oneself as a member of the provincial parliament. I looked forward to a fuller relationship at that time. I have hardly seen him since, I do not see him now, but I was hoping that we could welcome him back to the Legislature.

I am sorry about that, not only for personal reasons but also because we now learn, somewhat belatedly, about his interest in the free trade negotiations. We learn that he has apparently missed the most thorough and comprehensive review of the possibilities, and the downside, of free trade with the United States that has been conducted in any Legislature on either side of the border. That was conducted, of course, by this Legislature in 1985-86, and he has chosen not to partake in that—

Mr. Laughren: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: It is not normally that I would rise to come to the defence of a member—

The Deputy Speaker: What is the privilege? It is the member's time.

Mr. Laughren: The member for Armourdale's privileges are being abused because there was an implication that he left. He really did have to leave.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. That is not a point of privilege.

Mr. Laughren: He told me that he had to leave.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. That is not a point of privilege.

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Mr. D. R. Cooke: That is a shameful interjection if there ever was one.

In any event, had he followed our deliberations closely, he would not have penned this resolution. That is basically what I was attempting to get at. These negotiations, we must remember, were not the initial idea of the government of Ontario. We were not initially consulted with regard to them. In so far as criticism is concerned as to whether the budget should have included adjustment costs, I remind the members that it was the idea of the federal government, and presumably the federal government will be responsible financially for adjustment costs.

Even though Ontario-United States trade stands at \$95 billion or US\$69 billion—a hefty chunk of the Canadian-US two-way trade—Ontario alone accounts for 19 per cent of the exports of the United States. That is compared to 11 per cent of their exports going to Japan. We have a great deal at stake. We have an interest to protect. I am darned proud of what our government has been doing, the work and the care it has taken over the course of the last two years to protect those interests, especially when the federal government at times seemed not prepared or ready to provide that sort of protection.

This is a poker game that we are involved in, in actual fact. The Americans are proving in many respects to be much better at poker than are Mulroney, Carney and Reisman.

Interjections.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: We should stick to hockey, as the member for Wellington South (Mr. Ferraro) indicates.

The pressure was phenomenal. The Americans initially said that they wanted to engage in these negotiations with Canada, and then they told us that their law said we had to write them a letter first before they could start the negotiations. "Please, write us a letter. Pretty please, write us a letter."

Eventually, the Prime Minister, having been trained the way he was since childhood, wrote them a letter. The moment he wrote them the letter, the Americans said: "Well, this was your idea. What are you going to give us?" They were not necessarily prepared to give anything to us, because that might be un-American. They asked, "What are we going to give to you? Well, we would like to do something for you, if we could, but you know how protectionist our Congress is.

You know how protectionist they are. They are not in a good mood. You have got to treat them nicely. You better give us something more. We would like to accommodate you. Why do you not give us rights to intellectual property? Why do you not give us a new Patent Act? Why do you not let us into your investment a little more? Do not tamper with the Dome-Amoco deal. You might upset that protectionist Congress."

This concept in resolving crime is known as the good-guy, bad-guy syndrome. That is basically what they are playing, and perhaps Canada should be playing it too. This is the role being played by this government. It is a vital role. We have a de facto veto. The Americans know it. The Premier has said categorically that he will not support a deal unless he sees it as being in the best interests of Canada. It is as simple as that, and thank goodness the Americans know it.

Whether he knows it or not, the best weapon Mr. Reisman has is the government of Ontario. Let us hope he is using that weapon to advantage. The second-best weapon may be the Toronto Star, but the best weapon he has is the government of Ontario, and the Americans know it. The result may be a modest understanding.

Unlike the socialists, we believe we have to talk to the Americans and hopefully get rid of some irritants and hopefully obtain a dispute resolution mechanism. Certainly, we will have to give up something if we wish to obtain exemption from countervail and exemption from the House trade bill which is presently before the United States Congress.

Certainly, things have to be protected. The government has said so. The American negotiators are busy reading their Pierre Berton books to try to figure out what our culture means. Agriculture is a fight that has to be conducted against the United States and the European Community cartel by the wheat-producing nations on a global basis. That is really not a subject that should be considered seriously, except for some irritants in the trade negotiations.

The auto pact must not just be left alone but must be preserved, for the sake of the 1,200 companies and the 50,000 employees who are directly dependent on the automotive production industry. Autos are the largest manufacturing sector in Canada. They consume one sixth of our iron and steel, rubber and batteries; 14 per cent of our processed aluminum; 13 per cent of our copper, and eight per cent of our glass and paint production. The pact not only must be preserved but also must be strengthened so it will not wither away.

Yet we have the Governor of Michigan on the other side of the border writing a letter to Clayton Yeutter indicating we have what he calls an illegal automotive duty remission program; demanding that in the negotiations they include trade in automotive products governed by the Canadian-US automotive agreement and trade in all other automotive products within the terms of an overall Canadian-US free trade agreement; demanding that Clayton Yeutter require the government of Canada to implement the pact on a bilateral basis and require reciprocal provisions for duty-free trade in automotive products under the terms of the pact. That is what they are saying in the state of Michigan, which has a \$10-billion surplus with the province of Ontario. That is the nerve they have in the state of Michigan. In 1985, they had a \$10.3-billion surplus over the province.

What is it the Americans want, then? They want more. Thank goodness, unlike the suggestion in this resolution, Mr. Reisman has a weapon. He has a tough government in Ontario with which to fight back. He does not have the wishy-washy comments that have occurred from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), whose own caucus members are often embarrassed by the comments he makes on this issue.

An hon. member: Read some of them.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: All right, I will. In January 1985, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick says, "Free trade with the United States is not a realistic option." In October 1955 he criticizes the Premier—

An hon. member: Nineteen eighty-five.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: It was 1985. Who knows what he was saying in 1955? In 1985, he was saying, "Mr. Peterson is going along too fully with the broadly based approach of the Conservative Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney." That was October 21, 1985.

Mr. Ferraro: Who said that?

Mr. D. R. Cooke: The Leader of the Opposition, although he was not the Leader of the Opposition then.

By September 1986, he gives his full support to the free trade initiative for the first time. Then he changes his mind again in November 1986 and suggests again that perhaps we are going a little too far too fast.

Mr. Ferraro: Who said that?

Mr. D. R. Cooke: The Leader of the Opposition said that. I do not know what the member for Eglinton thought. He must have been ashamed when he saw this sort of thing.

Finally, the latest: On April 11, 1987, he said, "We should get off the fence and embrace freer trade with the United States even though it would give away the greatest weapon Mr. Reisman has."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grande: Are you supporting that or not?

Mr. Turner: Are you for it or against it?

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I'm agin it.

Mr. McFadden: In considering this resolution this morning, I think it is important to put trade into some perspective. The fact is, there is no country in the world that depends more on international trade than Canada. In fact, Ontario as a province exports more per person than any industrialized country.

According to figures released by the provincial Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, one job in three in Ontario depends on export sales. When one considers that the United States takes in 80 per cent of Canada's exports and 90 per cent of Ontario's exports, it is obvious why the federal government launched trade talks with the United States and why a new trade arrangement between Canada and the United States is critical to the future of our country.

Since 1945, the world has enjoyed the longest and greatest period of widespread economic growth in the history of mankind. During the last four decades, the world's annual output of goods and services has tripled. One of the most important engines for this kind of economic growth was international trade liberalization, which opened up the world and literally provided millions of jobs for people in countries throughout the globe.

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Today in Canada, two million jobs depend directly on trade, and of those, one million are right here in Ontario. Yet there are major storm clouds building. Protectionist winds are blowing as never before in recent years in the United States, in Europe and in other parts of the world. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, under whose auspices the tremendous growth in trade has taken place since the Second World War, is in serious trouble and is under attack from all sides.

It is easy to forget what happened the last time protectionism ruled the world economic order, back in the 1930s. One of the major reasons for the Depression of the 1930s was the collapse of the international trading system. This was brought on by the passage in 1930 of the

Smoot-Hawley Act in the United States, which raised American tariffs to protectionist and prohibitive levels.

As a result of the American trade legislation passed in 1930, Canadian exports to the United States fell, by 1933, to one third of their 1929 level. The fact is that if we had that kind of drop in our trade to the United States today, Ontario alone would lose 500,000 jobs. What is frightening is that the United States Congress is now in the process of enacting omnibus trade legislation which is more protectionist than any legislation passed by the American Congress since the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930.

The trading relationship between Canada and the United States is now the largest trading relationship between any two nations in the entire world. It represents a total trade in goods and services of over \$170 billion. As Thomas d'Aquino, the president of the Business Council on National Issues, said in a recent address to McGill University:

"The Canada-US trading relationship is much too big and much too important to be left to chance. The time has come to encompass it within the rules and discipline of a bilateral agreement. Without such rules and discipline, the law of the jungle will apply, and in the jungle, the strong usually have their way."

What might be included in any agreement? We would suggest there should be a further phasing out of most tariffs on goods shipped between Canada and the United States, a reduction in discriminatory procurement policies by government on both sides of the border and the establishment of an effective bilateral trade commission, which would be mandated to solve trade disputes between our two countries.

When talking about tariffs, it is important to note that some 80 per cent of Canadian goods now go into the United States duty-free, while over 70 per cent of American goods come into Canada without any duties.

A broad cross-section of business, trade and professional groups, consumer organizations and economists throughout Canada support the federal government, because they know a freer trade agreement will help the consumers, maintain and open up trade opportunities for our country in the United States and create new jobs for thousands of Canadians. But it will do more. A trade agreement will also preserve thousands of jobs now at risk as a consequence of protectionist US trade legislation.

The business community recognizes that the old status quo is over. Some members of this

House may not acknowledge that, but the old status quo is over, and it will be definitively finished when the omnibus trade act passes through Congress this year and is signed into law by the US President. The reality is that we, as a country, must reach a trade accord with the United States or gradually sink into a trade war with the Americans, which over time will cost millions of dollars and thousands of jobs.

A trade agreement not only will assist in maintaining an opening-up of vital markets in the US but will also ensure that Canada remains an attractive place to invest in new and expanded plants for both Canadian and foreign investors. If our markets to the US are jeopardized through a trade war with the Americans, we can be assured that new investment in industry will dry up. With reduced access to the American market, manufacturing plants and other businesses will be closed or cut back in Canada and in Ontario and new plants and businesses will not be opened. This will cost thousands of jobs in this province in the years to come.

We are not advocating the signing of a trade agreement at any cost, as this resolution indicates. Our resolution states that no agreement should be finalized which would endanger our political sovereignty, social programs, agricultural marketing systems, the auto industry or our unique cultural identity, and the Americans understand that to be the case.

The fact is that we are all devoted to Canada, on all sides of this House, and we want to see this country maintained as a strong and independent nation. Is anyone seriously suggesting that high tariffs will in some way make Canada more independent? Nonsense. The fact is that there is no example in this century where the opening of trade links between countries, the liberalization of trade, has led to political integration.

While the negotiation of a trade accord with the US must be one of our priorities, we recognize that we should also support the federal government's initiatives to strengthen the eroding world trading system through the new round of GATT talks. We should get behind that initiative. It is vital to Ontario, as it is vital to Canada.

We should also work to develop, in a concerted fashion, new international markets, particularly in the Pacific Rim, to reduce our overwhelming dependence on the American marketplace. But we should remember that development of new export markets will take time, it will take persistence and it will take considerable energy. This kind of initiative

represents a long-term strategy but no realistic alternative to maintaining our vital markets in the United States.

Where does the Ontario government stand on this? Does the Ontario government favour negotiating a freer trade agreement with the US or does it not? When you read what the Premier has said over the past two years, the answer is a rather fuzzy "maybe." On such an important issue, which is so critical to the jobs of thousands of Ontarians and the economic future of this country, we require a determined leadership.

Since studies in Canada and the US indicate that Ontario will be the biggest winner if a trade accord is reached with the US and would be in fact the biggest loser if a trade war broke out with the US, it is essential that Ontario support the federal initiative in an open and helpful fashion so that we can get on and establish a new relationship with our important American partners.

Mr. Morin-Strom: First, I would like to comment that the Liberal chairman of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs has again illustrated the duplicity of the Liberals on this issue. After a long harangue against the federal government, he again has confirmed that, yes, his party does support what the federal government is doing in pursuing a free trade agreement with the United States.

I must take exception with the extremist views expressed on my right by the Conservatives, that the choice here is between a free trade war—

Mr. D. R. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom) is misrepresenting what I said. I did not say that.

The Deputy Speaker: I listened very carefully to the member, and he was referring to "the Liberals." I do not think he referred to the member for Kitchener in any way.

Mr. Ferraro: He said "the chairman," and the member for Kitchener is the chairman.

Mr. Offer: Rule him out.

The Deputy Speaker: Did the member for Sault Ste. Marie refer to the chairman, the member for Kitchener, specifically?

Mr. Morin-Strom: I referred to the comment he made at the end of his long harangue, in which he said, yes, he is supporting this resolution.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I did not say I am supporting—

Mr. Ferraro: He said he was not supporting it.

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Mr. Morin-Strom: The Speaker may check the record, but he did say, yes, he supports the resolution.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We will check the record and take it up. We are now running into the time of the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: In point of fact, I am opposing the resolution and I made that very clear in my speech.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. We will check.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: It does not need to be twisted and turned by the member for Sault Ste. Marie. An apology is in order.

Mr. Morin-Strom: Now he is going to change the record. I guess I have half my time remaining. Thank you again.

I have had the opportunity to participate in many weeks of hearings before Ontario's standing committee on finance and economic affairs. We visited Washington, DC, three times to discuss this issue with congressmen, senators and administration officials. As a result, I am strongly opposing this resolution, which endorses the Mulroney attempt to negotiate a free trade deal with the United States.

Many important questions remain unanswered. Which regions, industries and people would be the winners and which would be the losers in a free trade deal? Numerous companies and industries and workers have indicated that they would be devastated, but not even the free trade advocates have been able to identify the winners.

Would we have to sacrifice unemployment insurance, environmental protection and worker health and safety, along with our cultural sovereignty, in order to conform with US practices? Such areas may well be extremely vulnerable under a free trade agreement. Will jobs that are currently guaranteed under the auto pact be lost? Will the family farm disappear in Ontario? These are serious questions which must be addressed and have not been to this point in this debate.

No doubt discussions are necessary to resolve contentious, nontariff issues. They are going on and they will continue. It is the focus of these discussions that is in question. The free trade advocates claim a comprehensive free trade pact would solve the risk from US protectionism. Instead of a comprehensive free trade initiative, we need better management of the trading relationship by the imposition of an impartial

dispute settlement mechanism. This could be accomplished by setting up an international joint commission aimed at mediating and arbitrating trade disputes as they arrive.

In dealing with the US, I would far prefer to be operating from a position of strength rather than one of weakness. To date, the Canadian government has shown nothing but weakness, having given into Reagan completely on issues such as the Foreign Investment Review Agency, the national energy program, cruise missile testing, shakes and shingles, low-cost generic drugs, the lumber duty and acid rain. What have we received in return? Nothing.

We now see Amoco taking over Dome Petroleum, and the government is looking at giving up all controls on foreign investment in Canada. Canada is literally up for sale.

One of the most serious problems facing Canada in this dispute is the American definition of free trade. It bears no resemblance to what the words might mean to the average citizen. Continually, we hear their reference to "a level playing field." The American terms are not tariffs but rather are economic and social policies. Any economic, social or political policy that would give a cost advantage to a Canadian firm over an American one is viewed by the Americans as a subsidy that must be eliminated under their definition of free trade.

There will be pressure on the Canadian government to match the US in such fields as taxation policies, labour laws, environmental regulations and private ownership of our forests. It could mean the end of Canadian social programs, agricultural marketing boards, government purchase preference for Canadian-made goods and regional development grants.

In support, the United States, in collaboration with Mulroney and much of the Canadian business community, would like to see severe restrictions on Canadian autonomy in economic and social policy. In this light, it is clear that free trade poses a severe threat to Canadian sovereignty.

Business people have claimed that the biggest benefit of a free trade deal might be to give Canada some exemptions from very restrictive trade legislation now going through the US Congress. From my personal experience in accompanying the committee to Washington last month, the people who believe that are living in a dreamland. This trip was a very valuable one. It taught us, as Ontario legislators, a number of truths. The US Congress remains in a very protectionist mood, with the Democrats now

flexing their muscles. Their only interest in free trade, however, is as part of a method to expand their domestic market. Any interest the US has in free trade is simply to make Canada part of Fortress North America, and that is not going to work.

One of the most famous stories that came out of that trip was our meeting with Senator Spark Matsunaga of Hawaii. Ten Ontario legislators crowded into his office. In his view, he had become a Canadian hero by casting the deciding Senate committee vote approving the fast-track negotiations, but his views were expressed by phrases such as these: "The sooner your country blends with ours, the better. I am a free trader except when it comes to Hawaiian sugar," and "Free means an integrated economy." Although his views were graciously expressed there was no doubt left that Senator Matsunaga had no understanding of Canada's fight for independence for over 120 years, nor did he think Canadians should resist the welcoming bearhug of American culture.

On behalf of all concerned Canadians, I want to say that Americans cannot have the fair advantage which had been requested by one of the congressmen with whom we met. Canadians do not wish to become a cultural, economic or political dependency of the US. Today, this Legislature should stand up for Canadian sovereignty by strongly opposing this resolution.

Mr. Mackenzie: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: My colleague certainly is not required to give any apology to the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke), but I may.

The Deputy Speaker: This is not a point of order. Apologies are not points of order.

Mr. Mackenzie: Could you correct the record, Mr. Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: You can correct only your own statements; you cannot correct someone else's statement.

Mr. Mackenzie: In heckling the member, I took his response to be yes, he was supporting the resolution, and I passed that information on.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Armourdale reserved 15 minutes for his wrapup, but I do not see him in his chair. The order therefore reverts to the normal rotation, which means that the member for Sault Ste. Marie has another three minutes if he wishes to use it.

Mr. Morin-Strom: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I had come to a conclusion and I would hope that the Legislature will strongly oppose this resolution. I look forward to the Liberals, in

particular, standing up and saying what they really believe on this issue.

Mr. Ferraro: It gives me great pleasure to rise and say a few things about the motion. I should say quite unequivocally at the start that I will be voting against the motion. While the member's motion was qualified enough to make it to some degree a motherhood motion, essentially I am voting against it for the last two sentences where it says, "including clearly putting forward Ontario's position with respect to this issue of importance to all Canadians."

I also take issue with members of the socialist party who say that Ontario's position is not very well known. I dispute that, and I say quite candidly that the approach we can take is one or the other. We can take the approach that we trust Mr. Mulroney that we are going to have unequivocal free trade, but we do not know what the agreement is—and I say quite candidly that I am sure the agreement has changed considerably since they first started it, for obvious reasons.

The other approach we can take, which is one that the New Democratic Party takes and that I do not support, is that we should not talk to them, that indeed we should do it on a sectoral basis and that we should not get into any free trade negotiations whatsoever.

I think the approach taken by the Premier is the right one. It is cautiously supportive, cautiously concerned and against selling out our country. Until we see the agreement we do not know what it is. We do not know whether we can support it, and we reserve that judgement. As my colleague the member for Kitchener says, "We are perhaps the best weapon Reisman has."

It never ceases to amaze me that we are talking about an agreement for free trade negotiation, and I want to reiterate this point, when we do not even have free trade in our own country. You cannot sell beer in one province unless you have a plant there. I refer members to an editorial recently in the *Toronto Star*, that bastion of conservatism. It says: "The 10 provinces are equally busy erecting and defending protective walls between themselves. For example, a trucker can't haul a load of furniture across the Ontario-Manitoba border without checking first to see if he has breached the different weight rules on either side." I mentioned the beer.

"Numerous well-publicized cases show the folly of such interprovincial rivalry. The Ontario Sheet Metal Workers Union used an obscure province-wide contract clause to force a Quebec ventilation duct company to drop a contract it had won in Ottawa. And later, across the Ottawa

River, the town of Aylmer, Quebec, ordered a new brick sidewalk torn up because it had been built of Ontario bricks." It goes on and on. It is ludicrous that we are talking about an unqualified—depending on who you are listening to—free trade agreement and we do not even have it in our own country.

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I want to make mention of the Conservative Party. I have some empathy for my friends, particularly on the finance and economic affairs committee. Their leader has jumped back and forth on this issue three or four times. It reminds me of a story. If I can draw an analogy to my friends in the Conservative Party, it is like being an outfielder playing for the Texas Rangers. There was a pitcher on the Texas Rangers who was to some degree similar to the Leader of the Opposition and he was having a pretty tough night. They were hitting about every second pitch he was throwing.

Finally the manager came out to the pitcher and said, "Well, son, I am going to have to take you out of the game." Like Mr. Grossman, who does not know which position to take or when he is beat, he said, "Coach, I am not tired." The manager said, "Well, son, I know that, but your fielders sure are." I say with great respect to my colleagues in the Conservative Party that they must be getting tired of switching their position as the Leader of the Opposition continues to switch his.

I have had the pleasure of sitting on the finance and economic affairs committee with my colleagues from the Conservative and New Democratic parties. We have gone to Washington, in my case twice; they have gone three times. Quite frankly, the last time was probably the most beneficial and rewarding trip in my view. We had many candid and long conversations with many powerful senators and congressmen, and I believe we did a tremendous job in the interests of Ontario. The one undeniable fact I concluded from this trip, which we suspected when we made our recommendations in our first two reports, was that Ontario does a lousy job in communicating; or if you will, presenting Ontario's interests to American legislators.

There are countries, entities, states that spend millions of dollars lobbying the United States. Whether we like lobbying or not, it is a reality. When you are exporting 90 per cent of your exports to the United States, as Ontario does, I think it is imperative that Ontario have a more substantial presence in Washington. Our sales force, if I can refer to it in that regard, at the

moment is in the body of Mr. Gottlieb, our ambassador. While everyone we talk to—it is my own conclusion and I am sure the other members of the committee will so conclude—says he is a terrific man who earns his pay and does a tremendous job, it is just not enough.

I can recall my friend the member for Eglinton presenting that questionable ally of Canada and Ontario, Senator Heinz, with statistics that in the trading relationship between his state, Pennsylvania, and Ontario, he has a \$600-million credit. Here is a man standing up in the legislature for no other reason and with no substantiation of facts in my view, bearing in mind the trade surplus his state has over Ontario, than that he is politicking, as many in this House do, because he is up for re-election. In my view, the hard fact of the matter is that Ontario has to have a better presence in Washington.

One of the recommendations we had was that we should have an Ontario House there. We have an Ontario House in Britain. We have an Ontario House in Paris. We have an Ontario House in Tokyo. We are in the process of getting an Ontario House or a presence in India. We have a presence in China. But the country on which we spend the least amount of money and with which we spend the least amount of time is the country where we are 90 per cent oriented in our exports. We have a federal representative representing us. There is something categorically wrong there and I believe all members of the committee believe we have to increase that presence substantially.

Mr. Wildman: Don't worry; Bruce is in Washington.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have recognized the member for Wellington South to speak, no one else.

Mr. Ferraro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot say it enough: one cannot put all one's eggs in one basket. There are other provinces that have representation there. I think it is a very serious mistake if we do not rectify that situation very quickly.

I want to conclude by saying again that I will be voting against this motion on the basis that I believe the Premier of this province and our caucus have stated our position quite clearly. It is, and I wholeheartedly agree, that we are not going to embrace anything until we see what it is we are talking about.

Let us talk; let us see if we can approve things. There is not a politician in the House who is going to stand up and say, "Well, we want to get rid of the auto pact." There is not one, not only from a logical point of view but from a political

point of view. In fairness, as most members in the House know, the auto pact can be cancelled by either side with one year's written notice.

So if nothing else, and I say this quite candidly, if they can come up with an agreement on freer trade that makes things better, that substantially gives more security to the auto pact—and I think everybody would have to agree that it is in our best interests—then I think, as the Premier said, when we see what we have to vote on we will then determine the best interests of Ontario and, indeed, the best interests of Canada.

I reiterate that Conservatives and Liberals were unanimous in the report of the economic affairs committee which said basically the same thing; but when we receive the pudding, we will find out whether we want to taste the pudding.

Mr. Stevenson: I want to concentrate primarily on some of the agricultural aspects of expanded trade but, because there is very limited time, I am going to go over these very quickly. It is quite clear that, when the Liberals invited Donald Macdonald in this past week to explain to them what the issue of expanded trade and fair trade is all about so they could understand for the first time what the issue really is, it is clear that he did not really explain it to them all that well.

Very clearly, I think the governments of Ontario have been after expanded trade with the United States for some time. Indeed, we put offices into the US and we had intended to put eight agricultural trade officers in those trade offices. The current government unfortunately cut that back to six.

I think we can look at the current discussions with the United States as really nothing different from a business person talking to his or her best customer. When that best customer starts grumbling about certain aspects of their business relationship, most certainly one is going to talk to one's best customer. I do not think many fair-minded people can argue with that.

It is our hope that, as a result of these discussions, we will see some sort of new committee or new tribunal established that will solve many of the trade irritants between our two countries before we go to countervail. A tremendous amount of time, cost, and of course all the politics involved have just been major problems in all sorts of trade with the US. But just recently in the agricultural field we have seen something more than \$100,000 spent by the corn producers' association. We are now seeing precountervail action in beef. We have been through countervail action and appeals in pork.

We are seeing it in cut flowers; and on and on it goes.

Anything to establish a new body to try to get rid of some of these problems will be a major step forward, and then individual issues can be negotiated as these irritants come forward. Certainly, we see that we can have some gains, particularly in the beef, pork and corn areas and in some vegetables, and we will have assured access to those markets, but as the motion states we very clearly want to make sure that our marketing agencies in this province, in this country, are protected. We believe, quite frankly, that they can be.

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It is broader than just marketing boards, as our friends on the left here are chirping. It has been very clear. The marketing boards have lobbied and our trade experts have lobbied MPs and MPPs extremely well and the people in the milk, eggs, chicken and turkey commodities have made their positions very clear. As the party that brought most of that marketing legislation into Ontario, we very clearly stand in favour of that legislation. We have protected it in the past and we will continue to protect it in the future.

Briefly, I want to mention the grape and wine industry. The member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) and the member for Brock (Mr. Partington) have brought the grape and wine situation to the attention of our caucus on numerous occasions and expressed their great concern, and the concern of the grape and wine industry, about what would happen if there was some sort of across-the-board opening up of the markets here to grape concentrates and to American wine. At the moment, of course, we have uneven tariffs that favour the US grape industry and that is a major concern to our local growers.

We also, of course, have the local Liquor Control Board of Ontario, which has discretion in listings and has differential markups. Any move to seriously alter that will have a major impact.

I wish I had a few more minutes to go over the song and dance that the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) has given on the trade issue but I will have time on some other occasion and I will put it forward at that time. I ask all members to support this excellent motion put forward by one of our caucus.

CLEAN WATER ACT

Mr. Speaker: Mrs. Marland has moved second reading of Bill 41, An Act to encourage the Rehabilitation of Water Delivery Systems in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for standing committee on resources development.

1208

TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

The House divided on Mr. McCaffrey's motion of resolution 9, which was negatived on the following vote:

Ayes

Andrewes, Ashe, Barlow, Bernier, Cousens, Dean, Gregory, Harris, Johnson, J. M., Lane, Marland, McCague, McFadden, McLean, McNeil, Mitchell, O'Connor, Partington, Pierce, Pope, Rowe, Runciman, Sheppard, Sterling, Stevenson, K. R., Taylor, Turner.

Nays

Allen, Bossy, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. R., Cooke, D. S., Ferraro, Foulds, Fulton, Gigantes, Grande, Grier, Hart, Hennessy, Johnston, R. F., Laughren, Mackenzie, Mancini, Martel, McClellan, Miller, G. I., Morin, Morin-Strom, Newman, Offer, Polsinelli, Pouliot, Ramsay, Sargent, Smith, D. W., Smith, E. J., Swart, Wildman.

Ayes 27; nays 33.

The House recessed at 12:13 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

ESTIMATES

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

Mr. Speaker: The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 1988, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. It is signed by His Honour Lincoln Alexander.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CHÔMAGE DANS LE NORD DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Pope: Alors que le taux de la croissance économique est très élevé dans la communauté urbaine de Toronto, l'activité économique stagne et les emplois ont disparus dans le nord de l'Ontario. Chacun doit recevoir sa juste part des fruits de la prospérité économique.

Le gouvernement de l'Ontario n'a pas réparti les bienfaits de la relance économique dont profitent certaines régions de la province. Le taux de chômage est de 4.3 pour cent à Toronto. A Sault-Ste-Marie il est de 14.9 pour cent. Dans le nord de l'Ontario, le taux de chômage est de 12 pour cent en moyenne. Il est évident que le gouvernement libéral tolère une grande injustice dont les gens du nord subissent les conséquences.

This government has failed over the period of one year, when we have had massive layoffs and unemployment in northern Ontario, 10 per cent more than in the community of Toronto, 10 per cent more unemployment in Sault Ste. Marie than in Toronto. This government has failed.

It has failed to follow through on the promise made on January 8 by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to put funds in the retraining of laid-off forest products workers. It has failed to have any kind of retraining program or employment program for miners. It has failed to help the workers of northern Ontario, their families and their communities. They deserve to be condemned.

TVONTARIO

Mr. Warner: TVOntario is an organization which all of us here and throughout the province should be very proud of, because it is an organization which should be able to create excellent educational programs, children's

shows and the type of material that can be used in our school system.

Unfortunately, as members are aware, over the past six years there has been a decline in the budget of TVO so that its programming cannot expand. This decline has been accelerated by the present government. In fact, the present government is now responsible for 50 staff positions having been eliminated at TVOntario.

The number of hours of programming by TVO will be reduced by approximately 10 per cent. The number of programs purchased from other sources will drop by approximately 15 per cent, and to quote the producer of children's programming, "We can survive with what we are doing now, but we have no one to develop next year's programming."

It is very sad to learn that the present government does not support the good efforts of TVOntario, and I hope it will reverse its unfortunate decision.

JET POWER CREDIT UNION

Mr. Callahan: I would like to report that I had the delight of attending the 35th annual meeting of the Jet Power Credit Union in my riding. Jet Power Credit Union was formed by a number of very young women and young men who had the foresight to recognize that when traditional opportunities for borrowing were not available to them, they could be made available through this credit union.

The credit union was established at the A. V. Roe company in 1950, and it was with a great deal of foresight that they did this, because they had assets of \$2.5 million at the time. In 1955, when the then Conservative federal government cancelled the Avro Arrow on the day known as Black Friday, their assets were reduced considerably.

Since that time, however, they have prospered in a tremendous way, and I would like to congratulate the members, the board of directors in the past, the present and those who will serve in the future, for establishing such a major event for the people of my riding.

ACCESS TO LAKES

Mr. Laughren: I wish to comment on an issue that is becoming increasingly important across northern Ontario, namely, the closing of access roads into lakes for local residents to go in and fish.

For a number of years now, there have been tourist operators on many of these lakes. They were given land use permits on the assumption that they would have remote access, they would be remote access lakes. In the meantime, however, the Ministry of Natural Resources, as only the MNR can do, allowed the forestry industries to cut right down almost to the shoreline, in some cases directly to the shoreline, and of course they had to build roads to get to the shoreline to cut the wood.

Now we have the fishermen going in and fishing and the local tourist operator who has a major investment in there, perhaps \$500,000 or more, suddenly no longer has a remote tourist lodge. Someone who has paid a great deal of money to fly in gets up in the morning and finds a bunch of boats out on the lake and people fishing and it is no longer a remote access lake.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has attempted to close off those roads, and in so doing it has alienated not only all the local fishermen but, up to this point, the local tourist operators as well. The Ministry of Natural Resources has made a complete shambles out of a policy. There is no need for anybody to have been alienated. There are lots of lakes and lots of fish in northern Ontario, and they have simply screwed it up.

PAUL RIMSTEAD

Mr. McLean: Ontario has lost a great ambassador with the passing of Paul Rimstead of the Toronto Sun. For many of us, the Rimmer was, in an abstract way, a modern-day Stephen Leacock.

Bass Lake was his Mariposa in the riding of Simcoe East. I know many of the constituents in my riding join me in an expression of sorrow at the passing of a one-man institution, Paul Rimstead.

He pointed out not only our foibles but also his own. He was a member of the world community, but we were rich through his presence in our community of Simcoe East. We shall miss Paul Rimstead and extend our condolences to his family. He was often imitated but never equalled.

PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr. Wildman: In this House, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) has admitted that a park, specifically Holiday Beach park, has been removed from the provincial park system against the guidelines of the Ministry of the Environment and against the regulations of the Environmental Assessment Act.

The minister has admitted that in the House, and it remains to be seen what the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) is going to do about it. Surely it is the Minister of the Environment's responsibility to ensure that the regulations under the Environmental Assessment Act are adhered to by his colleagues in the government.

It appears that in order to meet a political obligation to the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini), the Minister of Natural Resources has ignored the Environmental Assessment Act as it applies to the removal of a park from the provincial parks system. It remains the responsibility then of the Minister of the Environment to ensure that this is not allowed and that this government upholds the Environmental Assessment Act. We await action from the Minister of the Environment.

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OLGA TYNE

Mrs. Marland: I rise today as the critic for senior citizens with a very pleasant task, and that is to recognize the service and dedication of an employee of the city of Mississauga, Mrs. Olga Tyne.

Mrs. Tyne has been a full-time employee of the city of Mississauga recreation and parks department for the last 20 years. Indeed, today there will be a party celebrating her retirement, on the one hand because it is a celebration of the recognition of the tremendous contribution that Mrs. Tyne has made to the lives of a great number of people in our city, that celebration is taking place in a building which she had a part in planning and developing, namely, the Mississauga Senior Citizens' Centre on Cawthra Road.

In 1975, Mrs. Tyne became the co-ordinator of community recreation and was responsible for the development of arts, youth and seniors programs in Mississauga. Particularly, she was responsible for the inception of the Mississauga Royal Flash Majorette Drum Corps, which has won world recognition. She was also responsible for the establishment of the Mississauga Gymnastic Club, which is training world-class gymnasts.

I am proud indeed to recognize Mrs. Olga Tyne's contribution to our city.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I would like unanimous consent to make a few comments on the significance of this day for the Armenian community.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement? Agreed to.

ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: On behalf of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the government of Ontario, I rise for the purpose of recognizing an important event that took place on this day 69 years ago, the proclamation of the Republic of Armenia on May 28, 1918.

This date is of great significance to the Armenian community here and to Armenians around the world. Ontario and the Canadian nation have prospered through the courage and industry of people of many nationalities who have come to this land in search of freedom and opportunity. On this day we are especially mindful of the important contributions that our citizens of Armenian ancestry have made to our province and our country since first arriving in Canada to settle in the St. Catharines area in 1886.

The celebration of this anniversary fosters within us a deeper appreciation of freedom, liberty and democratic ideals. On behalf of the government of Ontario, I invite all members of this Legislature to join me in remembering May 28 as Armenian Independence Day.

Mr. Shymko: I would like to join in the remarks expressed by the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht) on this very special day.

The 69th anniversary of Armenian independence, proclaimed on May 28, 1918, is once again a reminder to all of us of the sacred responsibility we hold in maintaining vigilance for the very principles and the foundations of our society, of liberty, democracy and freedoms we enjoy both individually and collectively.

It is occasions such as these that not only remind us of that great important factor of vigilance but also remind us of the contribution that many of these communities, particularly today the Armenian community, have made to the growth and prosperity of our province.

I remind my honourable colleague it was 101 years ago, in 1886, that the Armenians first settled in our province at St. Catharines and later in the area of Georgetown. So, certainly over one century, they have contributed to the common endeavour of building the prosperity we enjoy today in this province and in this country.

I would also like to point out that we had a joint resolution by all members of the House from all three parties seven years ago. This resolution was presented by Gordon Smith, who represented the riding of Simcoe East, now represented by my honourable colleague to the right. This resolution asked the government of Canada to officially recognize and condemn the atrocities that were

committed tragically in 1915, where over 1.5 million Armenians perished through genocide.

We have held a very sacred relationship with the Armenian community to remind our society and the world that genocide and the extreme of those horrors is something that happens, but it begins with intolerance, with bigotry and with a disrespect that we sometimes unfortunately hold towards one another and collectively, group against group.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a few remarks in Armenian today, but it is unfortunate that according to a ruling you made recently—and I have the greatest respect for your office—the Armenian language or any nonofficial language used only on these special occasions will not deserve translation into the language of William Shakespeare.

We have to be very careful as a Legislature, as a parliament, not to have such rulings misinterpreted, signalling to our community out there that they may represent some aspect of intolerance or disrespect. In moments such as today, when we do occasionally use a nonofficial language and ask for its translation for the benefit of honourable members and the benefit of history, where these remarks are translated into English and they become a historic record, I would like to point out that shows the respect we have for one another.

I conclude my remarks by asking that the Legislative Assembly, through the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, perhaps consider allowing on occasions such as these any one of us to dignify the occasion by making remarks in the appropriate unofficial language. We should perhaps review the present standing orders and allow for a translation into one of the official languages. I thank the members for the opportunity to address the House on this special occasion.

Mr. Warner: I appreciate the opportunity to make a few remarks on behalf of my party. I think it is important for members of the assembly to realize the difference between Armenian Remembrance Day, which is April 24 of each year, and Armenian Independence Day, which is May 28 of each year. As this is the opportunity for Armenian Independence Day recognition, I naturally will not speak about Armenian Remembrance Day.

It is important to recall the words that were spoken on May 28, 1919, which was the occasion of the first anniversary of the republic of Armenia. To quote:

“‘To restore the integrity of Armenia and to secure the complete freedom and prosperity of her people,’ the government of Armenia declared that ‘from this day forward the divided parts of Armenia are everlastingly combined as an independent political entity.’

“‘Now,’ added the declaration, ‘in promulgating this act of unification and independence of the ancestral Armenian lands located in Transcaucasia and the Ottoman empire, the government of Armenia declares that the political system of United Armenia is a democratic republic and it has become the government of this United Republic of Armenia.’”

This was in keeping with a statement that had been made almost a year earlier, on August 1, 1918, when the acting chairman of the Armenian National Council was reflecting on the aspirations of the Armenian people. It is important to read this quotation, because when we reflect on what has happened from then until now, I think we will know the significance of today’s events.

“Yes, our republic is small and its bounds are narrow. It is deprived of its best lands, and there is not enough room for all the people. It seems as if conditions are lacking for its independent existence. But I feel that the boundaries of a state cannot remain inflexible for ever. I believe that our borders will spread with the iron force of life, with defence of our just and indisputable rights concerning the occupied lands, and with a new treaty of friendship with Turkey and its allied governments... We have chosen the path of mutual agreement and peace, and we would like to believe that we are not mistaken in this.”

As we know, the independence has been lost and the land has been lost, but the spirit of the Armenian people has not been lost. The hope of the Armenians is that their land will be returned to them. We support their hope and call on our national government to assist Armenian Canadians in the quest to fulfil their aspirations.

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Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I might have the unanimous consent of the House to commemorate briefly the retirement of one of the servants of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement?
Agreed to.

GEORGE LUBINSKI

Mr. Grossman: This Legislature is the sum total of many people’s efforts. On television, the viewer gets to see the MPPs, and if they are still tuning in after they have seen us they sometimes see the Clerk of the House and the staff. We all

know they get to see the Speaker all the time; mostly during my questions, I might add.

There is more to the Legislature than these people. For example, there are the special constables who keep order, so to speak, in the area surrounding this chamber. Today, my party and I would like to pay tribute to one of the special constables, George Lubinski. George has been with us in the Legislature since 1975, since the time the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and myself, as well as others, joined this assembly.

George first began his career with the province, ironically and maybe coincidentally, maybe appropriately, working in security at the Royal Ontario Museum. Someone thought it was appropriate to move from the museum to keeping equal order in the Legislature of Ontario. For the past five years, George has been serving Ontario, while the gallery is in session, at his post just under the press gallery on this side of the House, which we have come to learn to enjoy so much.

George has seen a lot of history from that vantage point but he has experienced a lot of history in his own life. He fought for the freedom of Poland in the Second World War, escaped the Nazi invasion and was awarded the rank of captain in the Polish forces in exile. Following the war, he served as a Polish liaison officer with the British Army, where it was his duty to help displaced persons, the victims of slave labour and the concentration camps, to find their way back home.

George has certainly earned his retirement. We on this side of the House have come to regard him as a colleague and certainly as a friend. We will miss his thoughtfulness, his cheery “Good day” or “Good afternoon” or “Very good question, sir,” as we depart the House every day. George will be leaving us on Friday to spend his well-earned retirement with his wife Henrietta.

To you, George, and to Henrietta, my caucus and I wish you all the very best. We will miss you.

Mr. Breaugh: On behalf of my caucus and I am sure all members, I want to join in the congratulations that are in order for George Lubinski today. There seems to be a regular stream of retirements from that corner of the chamber for some reason. George is one of many distinguished members who will not be around for a little while. I want to thank him for his efforts here as a security officer.

Members will know that part of the job of guarding the chamber entails being here, often when it is exciting and often when it is not so exciting, and part of George’s job is to—perhaps

the television cameras could do something extraordinary, Mr. Speaker; George is now appearing just to your left. He is not allowed on the floor of the chamber, but I think he has been here long enough that all members would want to join me in asking that George gets a little picture on the video. We want to congratulate him and hope that he and Henrietta have a fine retirement.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I, too, would like to rise on behalf of the government side of the House to wish George Lubinski well on his retirement. He has served this Legislature well over the past 12 and a half years. George always made us feel more safe around here, particularly me in my 10 years in opposition; and he always gave us directions. We would like to wish George and his family well for his contribution to the Legislature and the province of Ontario.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The government of Ontario has demonstrated a strong commitment to the encouragement of independence and self-direction for citizens of this province who have developmental disabilities. Today, I am pleased to announce a multi-year plan that will serve as a road map to maximum participation in society for as many as 11,000 with developmental handicaps in Ontario.

We are launching a series of new strategies over the next seven years. With the co-operation of our partners in the community, the associations and groups that will help deliver these services, we are laying the cornerstone for a new long-term system.

This recasting of future directions is the result of an extensive reassessment of our services to developmentally handicapped citizens in this province. It is the product of a great deal of input and advice from the families of handicapped people, service agencies and interested individuals across Ontario.

Specifically, we are now committing ourselves to the following long-term goals: the establishment of a comprehensive community service system in which all developmentally handicapped people receive the support they require in their home communities, and the phase-out of all institutional placement of people with developmental handicaps.

The introduction of this new era of community living will be advanced through a seven-year series of new service initiatives and program modifications, but before I go into the details I

would like to briefly sketch the history of this new vision.

In 1974, the responsibility for service to developmentally handicapped individuals was shifted to this ministry from the Ministry of Health. At that time, Ontario made a major commitment to provide community living alternatives to people with developmental handicaps.

Community service expansion since that time has enabled the ministry to reduce the number of developmentally handicapped people living in institutions by almost 3,000. More important, we have increased the number of those served in their home communities from 4,600 to about 25,000.

The accomplishments of the last decade are the result of our partnership with associations for the mentally retarded and other community associations. In addition, other ministries—most notably the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health—launched initiatives which were major contributors to the goal of full integration.

We have accomplished much more than numbers, however. We have learned the concept of community living does indeed work. There is broad agreement that the transfer of developmentally handicapped people from institutions to community alternatives has resulted in an improved quality of life for all concerned. These social and human benefits have convinced us that we are on the right track. This province must now continue to promote a level of integration and participation of its developmentally handicapped citizens that was not previously considered possible. We are talking about a new era of service to people with developmental handicaps, new forms of living options for these citizens of this province.

Beginning immediately, over the next seven years we will provide a wide range of residential, supported living, employment, day program and support services for 8,000 to 9,000 developmentally handicapped people now living in the community.

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We will assist families to better care for their developmentally handicapped children at home through parent relief, infant development and other forms of developmental programs. We will assist the sons and daughters of ageing parents to set up households with the support and supervision they need. We will reform the sheltered workshop system, introducing state-of-the-art forms of affirmative business, employment training and supported employment programs.

We will establish an objective and equitable wage policy for the people in employment training and alternatives to competitive employment. We will provide community-living opportunities for 1,000 developmentally handicapped people currently living in institutions. We will provide community-living opportunities for 1,000 people with developmental handicaps who are now living in nursing homes and we will work with community service agencies to ensure their management skills are equal to the challenges that lie ahead.

It must be recognized that the goal of total community living cannot be accomplished within these seven years. We cannot turn our backs on those who will continue to live in institutions, for the time being at least.

As a result, we will ensure that high-quality services continue to be offered by the institutional sector. Renovations and upgrading will be carried out to ensure that health and safety standards are maintained until such time as all people are transferred out.

In addition, we are committed to using the expertise and the experience of institutional staff to contribute to the goal of community living for developmentally disabled people. These valuable employees must be given options for the future.

I would like to emphasize that what we have here is an architectural plan, a preliminary design to expand the boundaries of what the community-living concept means. Our next step is to consult with our partners in the community in order to implement and refine our strategies.

We have a lot to do. We are building a new future for thousands of developmentally handicapped children and adults, individuals who are our brothers and sisters, our sons and daughters, our neighbours.

The goal is to offer these special people lives of quality and purpose—no more, no less than the members of this House could wish for themselves.

Our duty is clear. Together, caring men and women across this province can make this a reality.

CENTRES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am pleased to announce today that the government is calling for proposals for centres of entrepreneurship at Ontario's post-secondary institutions.

The centres will be designed to provide a focus for entrepreneurial research and skills development. Details of the objectives and proposal

assessment criteria have been distributed to universities and colleges.

There will be six centres of entrepreneurship established on a pilot-project basis, divided equally between provincial universities and community colleges, although it is important to point out that, as with centres of excellence, consortia applications are eligible and, indeed, are being encouraged.

A titre d'information, je soutiens que cette initiative est patronnée par le conseil du Premier Ministre établi en juillet 1986 et dont le mandat est d'encourager l'esprit d'entreprise et la créativité dans toute la province et de consolider fermement la position de l'Ontario comme société de classe internationale capable de se mesurer à n'importe quel pays.

The council's committee on entrepreneurship determined that measures are required to foster an environment conducive to business initiatives and activity. These are a necessary complement to the other efforts of the council to support and encourage scientific and technological research, as well as innovation in the private sector and post-secondary institutions.

We are asking that detailed proposals be submitted to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities by Friday, July 17. The province will fund up to 75 per cent of the eligible costs of establishing a centre of entrepreneurship, to a maximum of \$150,000 per annum for four years. The provincial commitment will complement private sector support, either in cash or kind, for the remaining 25 per cent of the commitment.

Le succès de ces centres dépendra de la participation du secteur privé qui jouera un rôle crucial pour l'intégration,—

Mr. Rae: Are you going to give an MA in pyramid selling?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: You will have your turn.

—la coordination et le développement des activités en gestion d'entreprise.

The centres of entrepreneurship will also support the work of campus-based innovation centres, invite experts to review business plans of budding entrepreneurs and stimulate studies on entrepreneurship. This is another program aimed at encouraging co-operation among the various sectors of our society, and it reaffirms the conviction of this government that, "Ontario will flourish only as an enterprising society when business, labour, educational institutions and government work together to create prosperity and opportunity."

This initiative is an integral component of the overall thrust announced in the speech from the

throne in April 1986. It supports numerous other measures already announced to encourage the development of research and technology transfer to ensure that Ontario remains in the forefront of economic leadership and technological innovation.

MINING SAFETY

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Today I am pleased to announce new work place protections for miners in Ontario. These regulatory safeguards, as they relate to ground control, are the most rigorous and advanced in Canada. They have been developed in consultation with, and unanimously recommended by, the Ministry of Labour's Mining Legislative Review Committee. This committee has four members representative of labour and four members representative of management.

All members of this Legislative Assembly have deep concerns about worker health and safety. The new mining regulations represent an outstanding example of how effective a co-operative approach to the work place health and safety challenge can be.

The measures I am announcing involve additions to our mining health and safety regulations in five areas: underground lighting, mine design, falling-object protection, training and communication. The new provisions will be published in the May 30 issue of the Ontario Gazette. All but the underground lighting provision will take effect next Monday, June 1. The lighting measure will take effect June 1, 1988.

Here is what we are doing. In underground lighting, our regulation will now specify for the first time anywhere in North America what the illumination must be so that the miner can more clearly see and evaluate ground conditions in the area in which he is working.

In mine design, our new provision will require, for the first time anywhere in Canada an annual written assessment of the ground stability of a mine. This will include a copy of the mine design, a description of its geological features, outlines of existing and planned excavations and descriptions of previous instances of ground instability.

In falling-object protection, our regulation will require mine owners, in certain circumstances, to install devices on motorized vehicles to protect drivers. In communication, our regulation will require, for the first time anywhere in Canada, specific procedures for passing information on a mine's safety conditions between all shifts and between all workers and supervisors.

In training, our regulation will require programs to be put in place for hard-rock and soft-rock miners.

These new measures, which constitute a major addition to the mining regulations, are a direct result of the report of the Provincial Inquiry into Ground Control and Emergency Preparedness in Ontario Mines. As honourable members will recall, the government has already taken significant action on that report. With the solid co-operation and support of both labour and management in the mining sector, a research institute in ground control has been established and improved training programs for miners, supervisors and nonminers are being implemented through the Mining Tripartite Committee on Training.

In addition to the chair in rock mechanics and ground control at Laurentian University that has been funded by the government, chairs have been established at Queen's University and the University of Toronto. Expanded mine rescue training and equipment acquisitions are being implemented through a tripartite Technical Advisory Committee on Mine Rescue. In co-operation with the Steelworkers and Mine, Mill unions and mining industry management, we are reviewing the recommendations concerning first-aid qualifications and regulations for underground mines.

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Finally, as part of the government's major northern relocation, we are establishing a miners' health and safety centre in Sudbury as part of the consolidation of our mining health and safety branch there.

I know that we will all be encouraged by these initiatives and by the co-operative work that has been done by labour, management and government to bring about the new regulatory protections to Ontario miners that I have just described.

STABILIZATION PAYMENTS

Hon. Mr. Riddell: Coming from southwestern Ontario, Mr. Speaker, you will appreciate this profound statement.

White beans are a major cash crop in this province. White pea bean producers have contributed an average of \$28.4 million annually to Canada's trade balance. That kind of return to growers and the economy as a whole is something well worth protecting and this is doubly important to this province since the bulk of Canada's white beans are grown here.

As we have demonstrated to the honourable members in the past, this government is firmly

committed to the principle of tripartite national stabilization plans for food producers. These are income assurance programs to protect producers from dramatic price fluctuations. The national tripartite program for red meat producers is but one example of an ongoing trend, which leads to the announcement I am pleased to make today.

In conjunction with the government of Canada and the growers concerned, Ontario has signed a national tripartite stabilization plan for white beans. This agreement also provides for coverage for other dry edible beans in the future.

This will be a voluntary program for producers with the cost shared equally by them and the federal and provincial governments. In addition, white bean growers in Ontario enrolled in the 1985-86 stabilization year will receive a payment of \$730,000 under the Ontario grain stabilization program. This represents the total payment for the crop this year and should put money into the hands of 1,079 white bean growers by the end of June.

This new national program is another positive step forward, part of my government's continuing efforts to bring greater financial stability to the farmers of this province.

RESPONSES

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. Grossman: The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) made another of the government's multi-year statements outlining a plan to help 11,000 developmentally handicapped people over seven years. One would have thought that with \$8 billion in additional revenues since it came to office and with \$275 million being devoted to 5,000 new civil servants, it might not have taken seven years to assist 11,000 developmentally handicapped people. Indeed, that is just over 1,000 people a year it is going to have the money to look after.

The minister reports quite accurately that this initiative was begun long before he became minister, in fact in 1974. He goes on to point out that 3,000 people have been moved out of institutions into the community in that time. His very modest goal is another 2,000, over the next seven years we presume, so he is purporting not to increase the rate but in fact to take 3,000 who have already moved out and add another 2,000.

We wonder whether the minister, who clearly had enough work done to outline what he today calls only a preliminary design, a road map, yet knew specifically that \$33.6 million would be spent, might have taken the time today to tell us what the communities are and what the specific

plan is. He knew enough to talk about \$33.6 million. We have come to know that he often does not spend the money he says he will, but if he had it: What are the communities? What is the process? Who has he consulted with? Which parents has he spoken to? Which communities has he dealt with?

Indeed, when one gets to the very last paragraph, it becomes clear that this is just a promise, another of those seven-year promises where he says is just a road map to the future. A road map to the future after two years in office is simply not adequate. He should have come forward today with a plan.

CENTRES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. Grossman: Speaking about inadequate, I want to speak about the incredible statement made by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) outlining six centres of entrepreneurship established after two years in office, one year after they set up the Premier's Council. One year at work and they now have decided to call for tenders for a pilot project. What are they going to give it? This announcement says \$150,000 a year. I am not making that up. It says here \$150,000 a year on these entrepreneurship centres. In other words, they are going to spend as much on these new centres as they spend on airplane flights throughout Ontario for the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine).

I was also interested to see the definition. I urge everyone to read the minister's statement calling for the entrepreneurship centres, which will help "review business plans of budding entrepreneurs and stimulate studies on entrepreneurship;" and then to refer back to page 10 of my 1984 budget, which says: "We will establish innovation centres in selected universities...to link the marketplace and the academic community...These centres will provide a...point of entry for local businesses to draw on the expertise of our learning institutions," and so on.

When one reads the announcement, what the minister is doing, as he admits on page 3, is adding \$150,000 a year to the innovation centres that were put in three years ago by his predecessors on the campuses of all six institutions. He is taking the old innovation centres that have worked well and is giving another \$150,000 per year in the case of six of them. Boy, I cannot wait to speak to President Mitterrand this evening and tell him about this. He will probably leave the dinner, leave the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in his black tie, fly home to France and say: "Look

out, colleagues, the Ontarians are coming. They are putting \$150,000 a year into six institutions for innovation."

MINING SAFETY

Mr. Pope: Briefly, I am pleased that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) has joined the evolving process of improvements or enhancement of occupational health and safety in mines. I specifically want to know, and I think it is clear the Minister of Labour should have indicated today, what the compliance period will be, whether there is any help for small mines or for mining companies that go into old mines that are no longer in production and whether they will have some help with compliance to make them carry out that compliance immediately.

We welcome the reference to the safety centre in Sudbury, but we believe assessment and medical research centres should be established in other mining communities in northern Ontario.

STABILIZATION PAYMENTS

Mr. Stevenson: The announcement on white beans is just one of the announcements that farmers in Ontario have been waiting for. We have not heard from the minister on apples, and of course we have not heard anything about what is going on in the red meat sector, where British Columbia now is giving \$11 a ton to its farmers and \$15 per ton to grain producers for producing grain for feed.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to respond to the statement by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney). First, I laud him for the goals of his announcement about finally ending institutionalization and allowing people who are developmentally handicapped to participate in our communities. However, following that I must say it is a bit disappointing to see that there is no mention of money. There is no question about the need but he is not saying what he is going to put in. We already know he is terribly underfunding the community needs that are out there.

What we have real need of here is not a preliminary plan but a very full paper. He has been working on this for over a year. I do not understand why we do not have a very precise idea of where the money is going to be spent and who is going to be helped.

Mr. Drea, not known for being a progressive, closed 1,000 beds within five years. I think we should look at this minister's promises in that

context. If we look at the nursing homes, about half the people who are developmentally handicapped would be remaining in those nursing homes after his seven-year period, most of them older developmentally handicapped, many of them without even an individual program for them at this stage.

If we look at the minister's emptying of the schedule 1 and schedule 2 facilities, 1,000 out by 1994 would still leave 4,000 people in those institutions, as the present count exists, which is a far way from getting everybody out of the institutions as he has down as a goal.

I have some questions that come out of this. What is going to happen to the nursing homes that currently serve the children he is deinstitutionalizing? Is he going to close those or is he going to fill them up with people from the schedule 1 facilities, which is basically what Mr. Drea's plan did?

What is the situation of the mentally retarded in rest homes? I do not think he even knows how many are out there. A local association in Windsor discovered that in the University Rest Home, where they thought there was only one person, there were 24 developmentally handicapped. I would just like to say that what we do not need is an architectural plan. We want precise engineering specifics at the moment and we want a critical path.

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MINING SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I wish I could, like my friend the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope), congratulate the minister for what he is doing in mining but I am afraid I cannot. There are two key problems in mining. One is lighting and one is things falling on your head.

It is interesting that the minister has said he will improve lighting and that he basks in the glory of new regulations. In fact, what he is going to do is have a lamp that instead of being 700 or 800 lux is going to be 1,500. We are not talking about lighting in a mine that will make it like we are working in here. We are still talking about having a little white beam on the top of your head and walking around with that. That is what the minister is talking about. The owners in Canada have resisted lighting the mine as they do in Sweden where it is like working in daylight. One of the big key problems facing miners, and why so many are killed, is that reason.

The second reason is things fall on people's heads underground. Most of the miners are killed because something falls on their heads. The

minister was very cute in his statement. Listen to what he says: "In falling object protection, our regulation will require mine owners, in certain circumstances, to install devices on motorized vehicles." What about those who are walking around working? What about those who are drilling? No protection for them.

What, in God's name, is he trying to sell here today? That he is out to protect the workers? My goodness, they resisted this. They wanted much more because in the Sudbury region alone in the last eight months we have killed eight or nine miners. We come in with this minuscule stuff, package it up and make it look good, but when we take it apart and talk to those people who participated on behalf of labour in the tripartite committee, they say we are barely touching the bases that will reduce the number of accidents and the number of fatalities in the mining industry.

CENTRES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. Warner: I wish to respond briefly to the minor statement made by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara). It is not just that this announcement, with a small amount of money, is the wrong concept. Our party has put forward what I think is a far more constructive concept of the community economic development centres that offer the opportunity to bring together business, labour, community representatives and all interested parties in a community to work out plans for their area on how to develop and sustain business. That, to me, is a more substantial approach.

Worse than that, the timing of this is really an insult and it shows the bias of this government. While they are quite prepared to support the entrepreneurial community, they are in the process of closing out the only Centre for Labour Studies in this province, the one at Humber College, and that shows the bias against workers that this government has.

ORAL QUESTIONS

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Grossman: In the absence today of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, you will be pleased to know it is a brief question. How many new rental units were actually built in Ontario last year?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am not able to give the member a precise figure. I will get back to him with the figures.

Mr. Grossman: I do not expect the minister to know the answer right down to the last unit. I wonder whether the minister could tell us, for example, if the number of rental units built in Ontario last year was closer to 1,000 than to 20,000. That is an easy one. Is it closer to 1,000 or 20,000 new units?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I repeat to the member that I will get back to him with the figure. What I can say to the member is that the commitment I have made over the last 18 months of over 25,000 nonprofit housing units is far more than what that government had done in its time in the previous year.

Mr. Grossman: I find it appalling but not surprising that the minister does not know whether the government built closer to 1,000 rental units or 20,000 rental units in Ontario last year; he is the Minister of Housing. However, we did what the minister has not done. We called his staff, which is not a bad place for him to find out how many units were built. If he checks with his staff, he will find out the correct answer was closer to 20,000, but not very close; 11,000 new rental units were built last year.

Since the minister has said, as he always does in answer to every question, that his government's commitment was greater than the commitment of the previous government, which is his only, single answer, I want to tell him that last year he built 11,024 new rental units. Four years ago, in 1983, 16,060 new rental units were built in Ontario. How, therefore, can the minister explain (a) his lack of knowledge of how many units were built, (b) the fact he is building fewer than were built four years ago, and (c) that in spite of that, the budget reduced capital expenditures for his ministry by 15 per cent?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If I heard the honourable member's first question, he asked me how many units were built; he did not ask how many units were built by the government. There is the private sector. As usual, I anticipated a very intelligent question from the Leader of the Opposition and maybe I looked in too much detail at what he was saying. But again, I stand by it that we have committed more units to be built in the more than 18 months I have been the Minister of Housing. I should also say that the kind of system and policy we have in place makes it possible for the environment to work much more effectively.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Grossman: I have another short, skill-testing question for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons.

Mr. Stevenson: Remember, David is not here today.

Mr. Rae: Come on, Larry, pick on somebody else.

Mr. Grossman: Well, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is not here again today. In the absence of the Premier, let me ask the minister for the disabled this simple question. Can he tell the House what the poverty line is in Ontario today?

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: The Leader of the Opposition should know that when he asks a question, he should be more specific. There are a number of responses a person could provide. Is he talking about the poverty line of his residents or what is he specifically referring to? He has to be a little more specific in his question.

Mr. Grossman: Let me try to be more specific. First, I am talking about Ontario. Second, I am talking about the poverty line for people living in Ontario. Third, can the minister tell us what is his estimate of the poverty line today for single individuals living in Ontario according to, say, the average of Statscan, the National Council of Welfare, whatever? What would the minister say the poverty line is for a single individual living in Ontario, approximately?

1430

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I understand the general context of his question but let me indicate that these kinds of questions the Leader of the Opposition is asking remind me of a line of Shakespeare that giving a little authority "plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep."

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: Let us be serious about this issue. This government recently had the opportunity to pass on \$150 a month to the disabled people in this province, whom it is getting paid to protect. With \$8 billion extra dollars, this government chose to alter its support for the disabled so as to make sure the \$150 was not passed on, but only \$50. This government chose to keep \$100 per month from the disabled. The net result of that is that disabled people in this province have been expected by this government to live on \$7,860 a year, when most people would know the poverty line is somewhere around \$11,000.

Given all that, it is a serious failure of responsibility for the minister (a) not even to have known what the poverty line is and (b) to have participated in a government which chose to

take \$100 per month away from the disabled and keep them \$4,000 below the poverty line. How can the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons justify having been part of a government that took \$100 a month out of the pockets of the disabled?

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: The Leader of the Opposition and some of his members have asked this question in a number of ways over the last three weeks. I do not blame them for asking their questions, but let me point out to them that there is simply no comparison between what this government has done over the last 18 months and what they produced previously in the last 10 years. When we look at the programs, I can provide the member with a whole litany of progressive steps this government has taken for disabled persons.

Let me add finally that there is simply no doubt in my mind, this government's mind or the minds of those people who are serving the disabled community, that progress has been great and has been phenomenal. The people whom we are serving are happy that we have taken those steps.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Rae: I see the Minister of Labour is coming back. I have a question for him.

Further to the questions I was asking yesterday about the death of Stefano Rizzi, the minister gave the House an awful lot of information about the number of officers who had been hired, the number of inspectors who had been hired and the incredible increase in the size of the staff of the Ministry of Labour in the safety branch.

Can the minister explain why, according to the latest figures we were able to get—we were not able to get the 1987 figures; we have been able to get figures for 1986—there are 69 field inspectors in the construction safety branch as compared, for example, to 102 in 1984 and 116 in 1981; and in 1986 numbers, the total number of staff is 105 as compared to 129 in 1981?

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. Rae: Can the minister give us today an absolutely accurate count of how many inspectors there are now at work in his ministry with respect to not only construction safety but also industrial safety, so we can have those numbers?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will try to be helpful to the honourable gentleman so that I can clear this up and he has numbers that are absolutely accurate.

I cannot tell him how many are at work today. I am sure the member will understand this. I would have to check whether there are vacancies, whether there is anyone with long-term disability

or whatever. The leader of the third party will understand that some of these positions are positions that were provided in the funding for this fiscal year.

The number of currently funded positions, and we are continuing to hire—I can tell my honourable friend we will have 11 new construction inspectors starting work on Monday of next week, four of them in the Toronto area. The number of positions currently funded in construction for field office inspectors is 109; in the industrial health and safety branch for field office inspections it is 157; and for mining health and safety for field office inspections it is 45.

Mr. Rae: Before the seals start to applaud, I wonder if I could raise with the minister the fact that the question that arises out of the Rizzi inquiry is not so much a question of how many officers are at work: the question is what is the best system for getting orders of officers enforced?

I note with interest that in the Ministry of Natural Resources there are, again according to the 1985-86 figures, 238 conservation officers, which is more than twice the number of construction safety inspectors across the province. There are 238 conservation officers. Presumably, the number of moose, the hunting of moose and the catching of fish is of greater importance.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Rae: In addition to that, there are 550 deputy conservation officers who are specifically deputized at various times and in various places to assist conservation officers in the performance of their duty.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Rae: In the light of what the coroner's inquest said yesterday about the need to have people on the job site whose specific responsibility it is to enforce the orders that are put in place, does the minister not think that is a very sound recommendation and one that should be put in place right away so that we do not have a recurrence of the kind of tragedy that occurred at Harbourfront?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Regrettably, the honourable gentleman continues to suggest and leave the suggestion that the orders that were issued on the job site were orders that, had they been complied with, would have prevented Mr. Rizzi's death. That is not the case. The leader of the third party continues to leave an impression that, frankly, is quite inaccurate.

The fact of the matter is that we have in the work places of Ontario today joint health and safety committees. Those health and safety committees have certain responsibilities now under proposals we have made in our draft amendments. In the final amendments, I believe they will continue to have more responsibility.

I expect that those committees will play an important role in ensuring that the compliance dates and the compliance times that we set on our orders are met. They certainly have every right. I quite publicly urge them to exercise that right and where those compliance dates and times are not met—and where, having not been met, they cannot get the matter cleared up—to contact our branch and we will get the job done.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Final supplementary.

Mr. Martel: Why don't you protect them using section 24?

Mr. Rae: I want to come back to this question because I think it is so fundamental. The minister seems to have agreed with the proposition that it is not going to be possible for every site to be inspected all the time, by whatever number of inspectors there may be. Whether there are 69 or 109 or whether there are 45 or 167, it is not going to be possible for those inspectors to be on every site at the same time.

The question I have for the minister is, why does his ministry and his government consistently refuse to introduce the one recommendation from this inquiry—indeed, the recommendation that has been made by my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) for a great many years—that it will be in the public interest to ensure that there are workers whose specific responsibility it is to enforce the act and who themselves are given some authorized powers to shut plants and sites down if the employer is not doing what the minister's government and his inspectors who have been on the site have told them to do?

1440

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The honourable member knows that the right to refuse under section 23 is written right into the act. The leader of the third party also knows that there are specific amendments and new strengths being proposed to the right to refuse.

I suspect the honourable gentleman is talking about expanding the number of so-called worker inspectors who are now present in some of the mining areas. Frankly, there has been a great expansion of the number of worker inspectors in the mining area. It is a technique that has been

used by and large in that sector and seems to work better there. We continue to review whether that technique can be expanded to the industrial sector, particularly to larger companies. Should there be a decision to allow that kind of change in policy or to support that kind of change in policy through amendments, then those will come forward at the appropriate time.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Rae: I have a question to the Minister of Housing. I want to ask the minister about what is happening with people who are continuing to pay excessive rents because of the rental increases that have been applied by landlords but have not yet been approved.

Robert Desy is a young fellow who lives at 135 Marlee Avenue, apartment 1905. He has seen his rent increase from \$695 a month in August 1985 to the current rent of \$945 a month, which includes a 28.2 per cent increase in November 1986.

On another occasion in this House, the minister said that Mr. Desy and others like him would have their complaints and concerns settled in hearings that would take place before March 2. I wonder if the minister can tell us when Mr. Desy's complaint will be heard, since clearly, with the 20,000 applications that are now in, he is in a backlog.

Hon. Mr. Curling: In response to the honourable leader of the third party, he speaks of many of the tenants who were not protected previously. Those are the tenants who are occupying units in post-1975 buildings. Those are also landlords who were applying for increases before January 1. It was agreed that they would pay the increases that were asked for and then the rebate would be given. That was an agreed process. Many times, the leader of the third party has raised the point as if that was a situation that was illegal. It is an agreed-on position.

In the second part of his question, the member mentioned March 2. We had said the rent review process would be in place, meaning that after the proclamation of the bill in January, we have done the necessary forms, we have set up the rent review process and we have done various other things from that point. Very soon, we will start addressing those appeals.

Mr. Rae: To assert, as the minister has in this House, that the tenants have somehow agreed to this rental increase or agreed to the process is just factually incorrect. To be charitable to the

minister, I am sure that could not be what he meant to say, but that is what I heard him say.

For the entire building at 135 Marlee Avenue, if the tenants do not pay this increase that has been imposed by the landlord, they are out on their ear, and the minister knows it. The tenants will have advanced to the landlord by July 1987 \$176,000 above the legal rent guidelines from August 1985 to July 1987.

The minister told this House and he told the tenants that all their problems would be settled back in March of this year. Now we know that is not true. We know these increases are going ahead and we know the hearings are backlogged because there are 20,000 applications waiting to be heard. My simple question to the minister is, how much longer will these tenants have to give their landlord an interest-free loan? At what point is the minister going to step in and protect the tenants? That is the question.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am going to ask the assistance of the leader of the third party in his questions and in my response so that the people of Ontario will understand it properly. We hope his question is not leading to the fact that we are doing anything that has not been agreed upon or is illegal.

Of the 20,000 applications he speaks of, and I think the figure is much nearer to 18,000, 15,000 of those tenants were never included under our protection process in the past. It is a transitional process, and we expected this number of tenants to appeal or to present their case before the rent review administration process and, later on, to the rent review hearing process. It is a startup process, and we are not in a backlog. We are monitoring the situation very carefully. I am quite sure they will all be looked after very shortly.

Mr. Rae: My final supplementary to the minister is simply this: my colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) has put forward a private member's bill which will deal very clearly, categorically and specifically with tenants who are in this situation, tenants who are now paying landlords rents that are miles above the guideline because they are in this twilight zone period of moving from not being covered to being covered.

Nobody is suggesting that what is going on is illegal. The minister made it legal. He made the collection of this amount above the guideline legal. We are not saying it is illegal. We are saying it is immoral and we are asking the minister to change the law by accepting an amendment since his own people have admitted

that with 20,000 applications these tenants are going to continue to pay amounts well in excess of the guideline, which is not covered by any interest rebate. They are basically giving an interest-free loan to the landlord.

At what point is the minister going to step in? How many more cases does he need before he realizes that he has a problem on his hands and he can deal with it very quickly?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I make it very clear again to the honourable leader of the third party that the process we have put in place will be effective and I will not step in to change that process at the moment.

The critic of the third party had his opportunity in the hearings to put those amendments through the democratic process. It did not materialize. We go by the law. We are a law-abiding country and the law is in place. I will follow it accordingly.

ONTARIO HYDRO

Mr. Andrewes: In the absence of the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) and in the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), a long-time expert on this subject, I will put my question to the Treasurer.

The Treasurer will know that since he became Treasurer of Ontario, Ontario Hydro's staff has increased by 3,800 positions or some 13 per cent. Since no major construction projects were initiated during this period of time, I wonder if the Treasurer can tell us what policy direction from his government encouraged that increase.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Actually, when the question was raised last week by the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), I was interested in looking at the figures. I believe the total number of employees now is fewer than it was in 1982.

Mr. Brandt: No.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I see. We will look at the numbers and see.

Mr. Rowe: Nice try, Bob.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: All right. Let us see.

Mr. Rowe: Look under your desk, Bob. Maybe it is on the floor.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Unfortunately, the copy of the annual report that I thought was right at my hand and I am sure is—I know the honourable member would prefer something more extemporaneous on the basis that Ontario Hydro is now serving 68,000 additional customers. It is building some of the largest nuclear reactors in the world—I believe the largest and the best—and the

chairman of Hydro can amply justify the numbers presently employed.

1450

Mr. Andrewes: The Treasurer will remember this quote given by the honourable member for Niagara Falls on June 7, 1985, shortly before he became Minister of Energy: "The Liberals would make Hydro more accountable to the Legislature. They have to answer to someone, which they do not have to now."

There are 3,800 positions which at an average cost of \$35,000 is \$132 million in additional expenditure. That is more than it will cost Hydro to forgo its banking privileges that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) announced earlier this week. The policies of this government have encouraged the growth, in the same way that same government and those same policies have allowed for a growth of 5,000 positions in the public service. If that is accountability, how can the minister justify that growth?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have already indicated to the honourable member that there are, I believe, more than 60,000 new customers. Ontario Hydro has a rate of expansion, particularly in capital construction, that is probably the largest in the world. I understand the Darlington construction site is the largest construction site in North America and that the chairman of Ontario Hydro needs these people to carry on his proper duties in an effective and efficient way.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. It follows the minister's statement today about the deinstitutionalization of the mentally retarded. In my response, I said that we deserved a more particular plan. I wonder whether the minister will give us the details on how much new money he is going to spend on those being released in his seven-year plan, how much he is spending on those who remain and how much he is going to spend in new money to keep those people in the community who are presently there. If he does not have that information, will he at least table with us the documents on which his announcement is based?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In response to the member's former comment, there is a much more extensive document that will be made public tomorrow. The member will appreciate that it has always been my practice to make an announcement in the Legislature before I release anything in a public way. He is welcome to a copy of that document, as is anyone else.

With respect to the specific costs, the first-year cost, the current-year cost of the program will be \$33.6 million; \$26.6 million of that will be for community development and \$7 million will be for institutional development, as I explained it in my comments, upgrading of staff and upgrading of facilities. The costs for the entire seven years will be allocated on an annual basis but I can assure the honourable member that I have approval from my cabinet colleagues and from Management Board and Treasury that the goals we have set will be met and that the annual allocations will be delivered.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Do we presume this is new money?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One thing the minister alludes to is his desire to stop having people institutionalized, to end institutionalization, and yet it is clear by his announcement that he is not closing any institutions and that there will be about 4,000 beds remaining at the end of this seven-year period in homes for special care and in the schedule 1 and schedule 2 facilities. Is it not realistic for us to ask the minister what he intends to do actually to see the end of institutionalization? Does he not see rest homes becoming new institutions de facto for people who now are not moving into schedule 1 or schedule 2 facilities?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The statement clearly indicates that the goal the member describes is certainly our goal as well. There are a couple of other factors that have to be considered, though.

Over the past five years, the five-year plan that was started by the former government concentrated almost all of the resources on moving people out of institutions and back into the communities. As a result, over that past five years the development of services for people already living in the community, the assistance to parents keeping their children at home, the assistance to older developmentally handicapped people living with aged parents, simply were not met.

That is why, as the first thrust, a considerable amount of our resources has to be allocated to those communities which have got so little over the past five years, and that is why the resources for an additional 8,000 to 9,000 people in the community are one of the major thrusts.

At the same time, we are going to be moving people out of institutions, we are going to be moving people out of nursing homes, and we are going to be improving the quality of life for those people who are still in institutions.

What I am trying to say is, we are operating on four fronts simultaneously. They all need attention.

TVONTARIO

Mr. Polsinelli: I have a question of the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. I read in today's Globe and Mail that TVOntario has had budget cuts for the 1987-88 season, and I understand these cuts will mean a significant reduction in the number of hours of English-language programming.

Will the minister explain what the impact of these cuts will be on production and programming?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I have also read the newspaper reports, and I would like to assure my honourable colleague in the Legislature on a number of issues.

First, we have not, through our ministry, decreased our operating grants to TVOntario for 1987-88. I think that is a very important first point. We have, in fact, increased them by 22.3 per cent or \$32.5 million, which I think indicates this government is fully behind that educational broadcasting system, which indeed is a cultural institution.

Second, in the area of program priorities, we have gone along and worked with the board, and our ministry has been taking a look at priorities. In the areas of programming, therefore, we have put substantial amounts of money into science programming and skills training. That does not mean we have lost sight of our commitment to children's programming; indeed, my son also watches TVOntario programs. What the article states and what I can commit myself to is that many of the programs will be rerun but there will be no programs that are cut. The production schedule for new programs will continue in its priorities within the next year.

But right now we have two priorities, science and skills training.

Mr. Polsinelli: I appreciate the very tidy answer the minister has given, but when I go home to my six-year-old daughter tonight, can I give her an assurance that her favourite program, Today's Special, will not be cut for the next season?

Hon. Ms. Munro: Yes, the honourable member can, and my favourite program also, Polka Dot Door. He can tell his daughter she will have a chance to revisit many of her favourite programs being rebroadcast, and that TVOntario is currently looking at new ideas to continue her programs.

DUMP SITE

Mr. Rowe: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I have a question for the Minister of the Environment regarding a dump site in Innisfil township in my riding. This site was closed in 1983 because of concerns about what was on the site and leachate off the site. Ongoing tests were ordered and the preliminary result indicated a large plume heading in the direction of a nearby residential area. The site was reopened in November 1985, while those same tests were not yet completed.

Why did the minister reopen a dangerous site, thus placing residents at risk of drinking contaminated water?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I will be happy to look into that for the member because, as he would know, a large number of sites in Ontario were approved previous to the environmental assessment process being applied as rigorously as it is today. Many of them were approved under the Environmental Protection Act. Some of them—
1500

Mr. Rowe: You were the minister.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: No. I am talking about the original sites that were approved. As the member will recall, I was not the minister when this site was put into effect. As he knows, all new greenfield sites in Ontario must go under the Environmental Assessment Act. One of the reasons we have that in effect is simply because we want to avoid these kinds of problems.

Mr. Rowe: I remind the minister that he reopened it, not us. We closed it and he reopened it.

His own ministry standards demand that a dump site be a minimum of 1,000 metres from a drinking source. A constituent of mine, Mrs. Davis, has a well 50 metres from this dump. Leachate is oozing through the ground behind her home. I have a picture of it right here. Why has the minister reopened this dump site, knowingly endangering Mrs. Davis and the other residents who drink this water? He reopened it. Why?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I indicated to the member that I would be happy to gather further information on this particular site. I would indicate to him that it represents, as I say, a rather comprehensive and extensive problem across Ontario that we are attempting to address at the present time.

One of the initiatives that the member would be—

Ms. Fish: You reopened it. You reopened it in November 1985. It was a closed site.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Oh, come on now. Let us take it easy, opposition.

For instance, one of the initiatives that the member saw mentioned in the budget of my colleague the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) was one which would address problems of the kind that the member has suggested exist. That is because under the money that could be provided for waste management, the member would realize the remedial action that is required can be taken. When there is further evidence that there is a contamination of a site, the options which are available to us at that time—and I will explore all of them—are (1) that remedial action can be taken or (2) that the site may be closed.

Ms. Fish: You reopened it.

Mr. Harris: Answer the question and sit down.

Mr. Martel: I knew he did not know the answer.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I appreciate the help from all the members; however, it is not necessary.

Mr. Harris: It was, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE OF
APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Warner: I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

The minister goes to Humber College and hands out money, and they are considering closing the Centre for Labour Studies. He hands out money to Durham; they lay off 17 staff. He gives a lot of money to Centennial College; they lay off 50 staff. If he keeps handing out cheques, soon there will be no one employed at our colleges in this province.

I would like to know if the minister can explain to us why, while Centennial College is receiving \$9.5 million extra over the next three years, it is laying off 50 staff members. Is it a result of fiscal mismanagement, or is it deliberate in order to help pay for expansion?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am surprised at the tone of the question of my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. I really am. I am wondering whether my friend is suggesting behind his question that perhaps if he were in my place, he would not have recommended a \$9.5 million allocation to Centennial College to expand their Progress Road campus.

As far as I am concerned, that project was approved on its merits because there was a desperate need for additional space at the

Progress Road campus. We are allocating nearly \$10 million to fulfil the aspirations of the students in his very own riding, who will be going to that campus at Progress Road within the next two or three years.

He asked about the layoff of some faculty members and support staff at Centennial College. There have been some layoffs, but that is because of changes in programming that require that if a program is going to be cut back or eliminated, one does not just keep the people on in the teaching positions so they will have a guaranteed income. That is part of the organic development of the college. I am satisfied that there has not been financial mismanagement. I regret my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere has suggested that there has been.

Mr. Warner: The minister, as Mr. Speaker noticed, has a rather distorted view of reality. I would suggest that a sloth with sunglasses has a clearer view of reality than this minister.

An hon. member: Sloth?

Mr. Warner: Yes. Can the member picture him with sunglasses on, hanging upside down from the trees?

Mr. Speaker: And your supplementary is?

Mr. Warner: Is the minister aware—and he is certainly aware that I supported the expansion of the college and pushed him as hard as is possible to get him to act—that the staff at Centennial College claimed that the college management reached a decision about the cuts of 50 staff members through incomplete research? The faculty advisory committee was not consulted, efforts were made to conceal the decision, misleading statements were made, incomplete data were circulated, students were not involved and several aspects of the college's strategic plans were violated.

Will the minister initiate a full investigation into the activities of the college management?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked. Will the minister investigate?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: If my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere pushed me as hard as he could on that allocation to Centennial College, I would suggest a very long program at Vic Tanny for my friend. If that is a hard push, I am wondering what he does when he treats me gently.

We have been concerned about matters at Centennial in terms of program adjustment for quite some time. I am not going to lodge a full-scale investigation because I am satisfied that in our program evaluation work and our

review of what is going on there, the adjustments that are being made are satisfactory from my point of view.

I should tell my friend—and I think he knows without my even telling him—we are looking at the matter very carefully. If there are matters that warrant a report to this House, I will do that, but for him to make the kind of suggestions he did in his supplementary is absolutely ridiculous.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Davis: Can the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons tell this House why, if he is, as his title suggests, responsible for the disabled, he did not stand up for the disabled within the corridors of power when the decision was made to take away \$2 out of every \$3 in Canada pension plan payments? Can he tell this House why he did nothing?

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: The member had my answer to this question yesterday. He has now asked that question a number of times, and so have a number of his colleagues. To my mind, that question was very adequately answered yesterday by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney).

Mr. Davis: To the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons: Perhaps he would like to tell the House—I will just make a preface first.

Mr. Speaker: A supplementary would be fine.

Mr. Davis: A supplementary on the preface. The question I asked yesterday had nothing to do with the question I ask today. What I asked the minister is what did he do as the budget was being established and his colleague was taking money away from the disabled? Where was his voice for the disabled? I would like to ask the minister, what does he do for the disabled in this province?

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I am indeed delighted to be able to answer that question for the member. My honourable colleague will know that:

1. This government over the last few months has instituted the change in the Ontario Building Code that my friend the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) was involved with, as was my office;

2. We changed the Human Rights Code with my friend the Attorney General (Mr. Scott);

3. As this budget was being released I was involved with the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in working out a program of accessibility to major institutions, including community and social service centres;

4. I would like to indicate to this House that we, for the first time, have instituted a program called the community action fund. That program contains \$800,000 for purposes of ensuring that disabled persons across this province can access this government for purposes of looking for jobs and services.

This government has produced programs that are progressive. We are proud of the policies of this government.

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GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Foulds: I have a question for the Treasurer, who will recall writing me on April 28 as a result of a letter and resolution that I forwarded to him from the city council of Thunder Bay with regard to gasoline prices in northern Ontario. The Treasurer wrote to me as follows: "As you know, the budget preparations are now well under way, and I can assure you that the topic of northern gasoline prices is under active consideration."

He may not know that the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) also wrote to the corporation of the city of Thunder Bay on the same topic on May 5 and said as follows: "Clearly, our task is to devise remedies which will result in lower prices for the residents of towns like Marathon.... The government considers northern gasoline prices to be an important issue. We will be announcing an initiative on this matter very shortly."

What happened to the initiative? Who mugged the Minister of Energy?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the honourable member will be aware that the budget had substantial improvements in the financing for transportation in northern Ontario—\$106 million for roads alone. We actually have something like \$27 million in the northern development fund, an additional \$30 million for the northern Ontario heritage fund, as well as all the jobs that have already been announced to improve the situation in the north.

The honourable member would also know that in recent comparisons of prices for unleaded gasoline, Thunder Bay was at 44.7 cents a litre; Vancouver was at 50.2 cents; Brandon, 49.2 cents; Montreal, 56.8 cents; Charlottetown, 52.6 cents; Halifax, 52.3 cents, and so on. I would not for a moment say that gasoline prices in Thunder Bay are cheap enough; they should be far better. But it was the decision made by the government to allocate funds to improve transportation for everybody in the north, and we feel that is sensible, fair, equitable and supportable.

Mr. Foulds: I think the Treasurer must have misheard my question. I did not ask about gasoline prices in Thunder Bay. I asked about gasoline prices in northern Ontario, specifically the one-industry, remote towns like Marathon. I asked him about gasoline prices, not about highway building or a heritage fund. His party campaigned in the last election on lowering gasoline prices in northern Ontario. That was a commitment they made in the accord, and they have not kept it.

Specifically, the Minister of Energy indicated the government would be taking an initiative on gasoline prices. The Treasurer failed to take that initiative in the budget. Is the government going to take an initiative on gasoline prices? If so, when?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The initiative, which I have already characterized as equitable, in the best interests of the north and supportable, has already been undertaken.

Mr. Foulds: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The Treasurer was wrong on his figure for unleaded gasoline. It is 47.7 cents. It is a misprint in his printout.

Mr. Speaker: It is not a point of order.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Pope: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I am wondering whether the Minister of Labour is still in the House.

Mr. Speaker: I do not see the Minister of Labour. Someone else would probably like to ask a question.

An hon. member: You would get the same answer.

Mr. Pope: Yes, it would not matter.

In the absence of the Premier and in the absence of the minister—I am sorry, here he is.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Where were you?

Mr. Pope: Where was the Treasurer?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was here, looking at your empty seat.

Mr. Pope: It does not look like it. The Treasurer spent two years doing nothing for northern Ontario. He has not been doing his job. He should not preach to anyone else about doing his job.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the member for Cochrane South take his seat.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Anyone else with a question?

Mr. Pope: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Can the minister explain why he has different standards for lung cancer among uranium miners in Elliot Lake than for lung cancer among gold miners in Timmins?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I believe the criteria we now have in place, which the board has been applying for lung cancer victims in uranium and gold miners, are basically the same as to the number of years of exposure and the time that exposure began. They are the same kinds of criteria for lung cancers in uranium and gold miners; they yield different results.

I can tell my friend that in the case of lung cancers for uranium miners, the Workers' Compensation Board has sent on a request to the Industrial Disease Standards Panel to look at the criteria it is now using; perhaps that will yield some different results.

Mr. Pope: The minister will be aware that the criteria used by the Workers' Compensation Board with respect to lung cancer in uranium miners in Elliot Lake relate to five years of exposure with respect to a certain kind of cancer and 10 years of exposure with respect to all other types of lung cancer.

As this is now the minister's initiative, as it was gazetted, can he explain to me why this government has allowed it to be gazetted and therefore has accepted, at least for comment purposes, standards that are clearly unacceptable, of 15 years of exposure pre-1936 and on up to 60 years of exposure after 1955, when the very same person who was chairman of that panel said back in 1976 that "compensation should be provided to victims of lung cancer whose disease can reasonably be attributed to working in uranium mines and that the act of granting compensation is a human decision and not susceptible to sharp, quantitative prescription?"

Why is the minister making these sharp, quantitative distinctions that are to the detriment of the widows of the miners who have died from lung cancer in Timmins?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I presume my friend the member for Cochrane South was present in cabinet when the idea of establishing an Industrial Disease Standards Panel was put in place. We decided we would put in place an independent group of experts, which we now have, to provide advice, not to the government but to the Workers' Compensation Board in an independent, scientific way, as to what the criteria ought to be for granting compensation on industrial diseases.

Now that this advice is being offered, the honourable gentleman says we ought to just ignore it. It is advice; the honourable gentleman also forgets that the panel is an advisory panel. The board, quite openly, can accept, reject or amend the advice.

We have put a pretty good process in place, and I would hope the honourable gentleman would allow that process to begin to take hold and take effect. It is a great deal better than the previous kind of hit-and-miss determination by the board, where it determined how much it would give, with nobody really offering the kind of independent advice that the Industrial Disease Standards Panel will offer.

ARGOSY FINANCIAL GROUP OF CANADA LTD.

Mr. Philip: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Now that it is fairly obvious that the Liberals in government have flip-flopped or taken a complete turnabout from the position they took in opposition on Argosy; now that he as the minister has obviously rejected his own party's research report, which says, and I quote: "The Argosy collapse shows a number of lapses in the administration of our investor protection laws as well as a number of shortcomings in the relevant legislation and regulations."

What, if anything, is he going to do for the senior citizens and other people who have lost their money in the Argosy collapse? Will they receive any compensation from the government? If so, how much and when?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member is well aware that the report of the standing committee on the Ombudsman, which looked into that matter, is tabling that report today. I have yet to see it. When it is tabled, I will look at it and then will respond.

1520

Mr. Philip: It is interesting that the minister has yet to see it when he probably told his four members who voted in a block on it exactly how to vote.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the member have a brief supplementary?

Mr. Philip: I wonder if the minister can inform the House how the small investors in this province can have any confidence in a regulatory system that allows a self-confessed swindler like Carnie, a rogue by anyone's standards, to operate as a mortgage broker and to issue securities under

the Ontario Securities Act? How can a small investor have any confidence in a regulatory system that allows people like that to operate right under the eyes of the regulators in this province?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that he is talking about a situation that took place over a period of 13 years. Since that time we have done a great many things. One of the things, which I hope to get third and final reading on today, is the Loan and Trust Corporations Act, which will bring a great many reforms to that whole area.

INSURANCE

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Yesterday, the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) brought to my attention and to the attention of members of this House a procedure whereby the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. was offering a negative option to some of its policyholders. I undertook to look into the matter and to get to the superintendent of insurance and report back to him.

I have the pleasure of telling the member that the superintendent of insurance first became aware of this practice on Thursday, May 21, 1987, and after review on Monday, May 25, contacted the insurer to advise the insurer that there was not an acceptable practice in this type of offering. We were awaiting its response before proceeding further.

On May 27, 1987, the superintendent followed up with the president of the insurer to confirm discontinuance, of which confirmation in writing was received today, May 28. I am pleased to inform the member that the company has discontinued the practice and it will revert. Anyone who took up the offer can have it rescinded. I am delighted to be able to report that to the member.

Mr. Swart: May I say to the minister that is not good enough. I had a call today from Professor March of McMaster University to tell me that over a year ago, London Life did the same thing to him without his knowledge. I would suggest to the minister that what he needs to have is legislation to prevent this kind of practice by all insurance companies in this province. Will he bring in that kind of legislation?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The record of this government over the last two years is that when an issue is brought forward and is deemed to need legislation, we have not hesitated to bring it in. We are examining that whole area. I am

delighted to tell the member that in the particular instance he brought to my attention yesterday, we solved it today, which is not bad, and we are in a position where we are monitoring these things all the time.

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Martel: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The standing orders say the minister should answer questions when asked, either under standing order 29(a) or under oral questions. Yesterday I asked with respect to Koolatron, and I quote, "will the minister table in the House all the orders issued and the compliance dates?" The minister did not answer, nor did he table any of those orders today. Would Mr. Speaker be so good as to obtain those for me?

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the request made by the member for Sudbury East. Once again I must remind him and all members of the House that I do not believe that I, as Speaker, have the authority to make any member of this House present any information. However, I am certain the minister responsible is within hearing distance somewhere. I am sure it will be looked after.

PETITIONS

FUEL SAFETY

Mr. Reville: I have a second petition on the subject:

"Protect our safety; keep the Toronto Taxi propane station closed until the report is received from the Committee on Siting of Alternate Transportation Fuels Outlets."

It is signed by 266 people, all of whom are members of the—

Mr. McClellan: New Democratic Party.

Mr. Reville: —Jamiatul Muslemin of Toronto. Actually, it is a Muslim mosque.

DRUG WHOLESALERS' DISTRIBUTION ALLOWANCE

Mr. Morin-Strom: I have a petition which reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and, in particular, the Minister of Health:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That it present a bill before the House to amend Bill 54 and Bill 55 to accommodate a drug wholesalers' distribution allowance."

This petition has been signed by 27 individuals from Sault Ste. Marie.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Harris: I have a petition signed by three people. It says:

"To the Lieutenant Governor:

"We, the undersigned, petition the government to answer outstanding questions in Orders and Notices, some of which have been outstanding for up to a year."

Mr. Speaker: That does not really appear to be in order. However, we will take a very close look at that one.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. McCague from the standing committee on general government presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 170, An Act to revise the Pension Benefits Act.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN

Mr. McNeil from the standing committee on the Ombudsman presented the committee's report and moved adoption of its recommendations.

Mr. McNeil: The report I am presenting to the House today is the committee's report on Argosy Financial Group of Canada and the committee's recommendations resulting from the hearings it held on this matter in April.

The committee heard representatives of the Argosy victims during its hearings, in addition to the Ombudsman, Dr. Daniel Hill, his staff and the staff of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations and the Ministry of Financial Institutions.

While the report is short and speaks for itself, it might be appropriate to state that the committee, after its deliberations, was unable to support the recommendations of the Ombudsman, including his recommendation calling for the government to compensate victims for 50 per cent of their losses.

The committee does, however, recommend that the House and the minister consider the

appropriateness of an ex gratia payment to the victims in recognition of the uniqueness and disturbing circumstances of this matter.

A substantial dissenting opinion has been included with this report.

On motion by Mr. McNeil, the debate was adjourned.

Mr. Philip: Another Liberal flip-flop.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke does not have the floor.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE TRAVEL

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the standing committee on general government be authorized to adjourn to Sudbury, Ontario, on any day during the month of June on which the House is not meeting.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the standing committee on regulations and private bills be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Wednesday, June 10, 1987, and Wednesday, June 17, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

1530

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

BEEF CATTLE MARKETING AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Riddell moved first reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Beef Cattle Marketing Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The present Beef Cattle Marketing Act permits the refund of licence fees paid on the sale of beef cattle at the request of the sellers. I am pleased to introduce the bill to amend the act and revoke this provision, making these licence fees, also known as checkoffs, nonrefundable. These funds go to the Ontario Cattlemen's Association, and at the association's annual meeting in February, 85 per cent of voting delegates voted in favour of this action.

In addition, the bill also adds regulatory powers to allow for the collection of confidential information on cattle sales.

These changes will greatly improve services to all Ontario cattlemen, and I urge the speedy passage of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LOAN AND TRUST CORPORATIONS ACT

LOI SUR LES COMPAGNIES DE PRÊT ET DE FIDUCIE

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved third reading of Bill 116, An Act to revise the Loan and Trust Corporations Act.

L'hon. M. Kwinter propose la troisième lecture du projet de loi 116, Loi portant révision de la Loi sur les compagnies de prêt et de fiducie.

Mr. Ashe: I rise to support the passage of Bill 116. As the honourable members are aware, and of course the minister is particularly aware, it is a substantial piece of legislation that, frankly, I think has been made better because of the process it went through.

I want to commend the minister and his staff for the amount of involvement they had in this piece of legislation and the process they took it through. I think we would all agree that the consultation that went on with the industry was substantive. The deputations and representations that were made to the committee dealing with the legislation were deep, to say the least, and I think the spirit in which the ministry people and ultimately the minister dealt with some of these changes was well received and very appropriate.

I sincerely feel that the growth of the trust company industry in Ontario has served the financial community generally extremely well and, most important, the consumers of Ontario. When we had only the major chartered banks dealing with the people, I think they were a very remote type of institution that really did not give the average person the impression they were there to serve them. They gave the impression they were there to serve the corporations of this country and this province, but not the individual. With the competitive coming into being of the trust industry and the growth of the services, it was able to provide us with not only those services but also, more important—to use the expression—it made the banks smarten up to some degree in their dealings with the public.

With the passage today of Bill 116 and, I am sure, the very early proclamation of same, I think the industry is in an even better position than ever before to be part of the financial marketplace of the world. We are in a very competitive market, whether it is in the financial community or elsewhere, and if we are going to compete in that market effectively and competitively, we have to be able to think of it in world terms. I think Bill 116 does a fair bit of allowing that to happen.

I do not think Bill 116, as with any piece of legislation this large, is perfect, by any stretch of the imagination. I can assure members the industry would have liked a little more flexibility, but I am very encouraged to note that when we were considering some of these areas that would have expanded, shall we say, some of the capacity of the industry in certain areas, the minister was acceptable to reconsidering, based on the experience as we moved along, implementing the broader areas the companies could do business in under Bill 116.

I hope the minister and his staff will follow through on that offer and make not only himself but his ministry available to keep up to date on the implementation of the bill and come forward at a very early opportunity. I am not talking about next month; obviously, we are talking about a year or whatever from now. I hope others will be able to do it for him in that time. In any event, I think the key is to make sure that if we are setting up an industry that is world competitive, we remain in that competitive position by being able to do it.

I think all the members of the committee took a very active part in making this bill better, but we on this side particularly would like to take a little credit for something the minister did confer about—and I give him credit for that—that is, making sure at least half of the directors on these corporations are outside directors. In the original proposal, it was only at least one third.

We had a strong feeling that was ultimately, as I recall, unanimously supported, including again, I acknowledge, the minister. It was agreed that a majority of outside directors was probably better to fulfil some of the other spirit of Bill 116, which says there should be others always keeping an eye on the operation to make sure self-dealings and so on do not go on.

In closing, this is a substantial piece of legislation that has been long in the offing. It goes back to the previous government administration and has come along over a period of years of long consultation, drafting and redrafting. I think it will serve the industry well.

I only received the bill this morning but I did have a chance to read every word, to make sure that all the amendments from the committee were in it. In so going through it, I found out there was a typing mistake on page 315. I hope there is only one. I will draw it to the attention of the minister, to let him know, seeing as it was on the last page, that I did read this whole document since this morning. The typographical error says section “322” rather than section “232.”

Mr. Morin-Strom: I will make some brief comments as well. I think the work that was done on this bill, which is a very substantial bill, was done very co-operatively and in a spirit of attempting to ensure that the consumers in the province, particularly those who are putting their deposits on faith into our institutions, our loan and trust companies in Ontario, do have those deposits insured and protected. I think and certainly hope this bill will accomplish that better than we have in the past in this province.

The bill is a substantial one. I understand it is the longest bill ever to go through the province, more than 300 pages. It is one on which we have received a number of submissions from industry and one in which we have made a number of amendments. The government proposed a number of amendments through the clause-by-clause process but the government was also receptive to amendments being put forward by both the opposition parties, and I am very pleased by that.

As we have just heard from the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe), some of the amendments made by the Conservative members were accepted. I appreciate the fact that one amendment in particular that I suggested—to ensure that the investments of loan and trust companies were not too heavily concentrated in the area of common stocks—was also accepted. The original bill would have allowed up to 25 per cent of their investments to go into that area. It was tempered down to a limit of 10 per cent, which I think provides better assurances of security for depositors in loan and trust companies.

The work was done very co-operatively. The government was open to suggestions and several minor changes were made in the bill—passed or not by very close votes, but very amiably. I appreciate the work that was done by all members on this committee and I hope we have established in law a bill that will hold this industry in good regard for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any comments or questions?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I just want to make a statement.

Mr. Speaker: You may make a windup statement. The member for Eglinton.

1540

Mr. McFadden: I rise to comment very briefly in terms of the work of the committee and the remarkable participation in this process of everybody who had any interest in this particular topic. I think it was an example, perhaps, for other legislation to follow.

I know that, for about four years now, the process of reviewing the loan and trust legislation has gone on, and right up until the very end we have had active participation through the process, day after day in that very hot committee room—participation from the Canadian Bar Association, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario, the Trust Companies Association of Canada, the Canadian Bankers' Association and so on.

It seemed to me, based on the comments of members of the committee during the hearings but also in hearings the committee had last year on corporate concentration within the financial services industry, that our overwhelming concern was the protection of not only the shareholder but also the depositor. What we sought to do through all of the work of the committee, through hearings and through the amendments, was to ensure that all the various competing interests were being met and listened to; at the same time seeking to protect the very legitimate concerns of investors in trust companies and loan corporations and the major concerns of depositors.

Our hope with this legislation is that we will never again have the kind of situation that grew up several years ago around the collapse of Crown Trust, Greymac Trust and all the various other trust companies that ran into financial difficulties in recent years.

The problem we have in any piece of legislation of this sort is that we cannot entirely guard against dishonesty; we cannot entirely guard against incompetence; we cannot guard against thieves, no matter what we do. But I think we have at least put in place a legal and a regulatory framework that will better protect the depositors and the shareholders who do business with the various trust companies carrying on business within this province.

The banking industry raised a number of concerns, which I imagine will have to be monitored by the minister and his staff to ensure that some of the worries they raise do not create problems within Ontario in terms of mortgage financing. The amendments that were introduced would appear to have addressed their concerns, but I think that area should have ongoing monitoring.

As I mentioned in the committee, an area I would hope the ministry would monitor is the process: There are various points in the legislation where discretion is given either to the minister or the superintendent and I think it is important, in all administration of legislation, that we constantly monitor the way in which

power is exercised and whether it should be changed on the grounds of either efficiency or fairness. As we pointed out in committee on several occasions, there are areas that should be monitored and perhaps amended at some future date.

For me, one of the most important amendments was the requirement that at least 50 per cent of the directors be outside directors. One of the things I think happened in recent years was that some people who owned trust companies were under some confusion as to whose money they were looking after and what was the most appropriate way to act. Hopefully, through this legislation, through the standards that have been set out, which are agreeable to the industry and interested parties, and with the requirement that at least 50 per cent of the directors must be outside directors, we can avoid the kind of confusion of responsibilities and the kinds of consequences which occurred in the various trust companies that ran into severe difficulties a number of years ago.

I am very pleased to stand to support this bill and to compliment the members of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs for the time and attention they put into this legislation. I would also like to compliment the minister and his staff for the detailed work and co-operation they displayed. As well, I think we should make special mention of the various organizations that spent a long number of hours over a considerable period of time working with the government and with the committee to try to put together a bill that is generally going to be satisfactory for the financial services industry in Ontario.

I am pleased to support this bill. I hope that as things work out over the years ahead, the kind of goals and objectives we have had for this legislation will come into reality.

Mr. Speaker: The minister may wish to make some windup or wind-down comments.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am going to be very brief, but I really wanted to put into the record my deep appreciation to the members of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs—its chairman, the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke); the member for Wellington South (Mr. Ferraro); the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden); the member for Durham West, and the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom), all of whom brought a spirit of co-operation to the hearings. This is truly a formidable document. It is the largest document ever to be passed in the history of this House. Another very significant

first, it is also the first commercial bill that is officially in the French language. That again is a milestone.

Before I close, I would be remiss if I did not publicly compliment the people in my ministry who did such an outstanding job in the drafting of this document, in anticipating the problems that could arise and working out compromises so that we could get relatively speedy passage through this House. I think this is an example of the finest in the way of legislation and how it is performed and created. All of the participants should be proud. This really is a fine day in the history of this House.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES CONFLITS D'INTÉRÊTS DES MEMBRES DE L'ASSEMBLÉE

Mr. Ward moved, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Scott, second reading of Bill 23, An Act to provide for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office.

M. Ward propose pour l'hon. M. Scott la deuxième lecture du projet de loi 23, Loi assurant une plus grande certitude quant au rapprochement des intérêts personnels des membres de l'Assemblée et du Conseil des ministres avec les devoirs de leurs fonctions.

Mr. Ward: Bill 23 replaces legislation that was introduced in the last session under the title of Conflict of Interest Act, I believe, a bill that died in Orders and Notices when the House adjourned.

Confidence in the government demands that those who serve the public must at all times act in the public interest and not take or appear to take advantage of their positions to further private interests.

I believe that Bill 23, in replacing the guidelines that have existed for members of the executive council over the past several years with clear legislation that applies not only to the members of the executive council but also to all members of the Legislature, is legislation that provides for the disclosure of the private interests of members, legislation that provides a prohibition on the carrying out of certain outside activities for members of the Legislature and provides for an independent arbiter to judge and make rulings on issues of conflict of interest.

I believe that all these things greatly assist not only the members of this House in carrying out their duties but certainly also the public in assuring them that in fact they can have confidence in the activities of all those in public office.

I look forward to the comments that members may have as we proceed through second reading of this bill.

1550

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments of the member for Wentworth North? There being none, debate? The member for Cochrane South.

Mr. Pope: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is always your misfortune to draw me.

The Deputy Speaker: Or the member's to draw me.

Mr. Pope: That is right. We dealt with that last time.

I refrain from questioning or commenting directly to the parliamentary assistant, although I have some questions I would have put to him. However, I think it is probably a better contribution to this debate if I just put on the record some of my comments and some of my concerns about this legislation.

First, I would like to briefly take members of this assembly and the people of this province over some of the history that led us to today's date.

Mr. Ward: I recognize that book.

Mr. Pope: I know the parliamentary assistant recognizes this book. This in part represents some of the information I wish to put on the record this afternoon with respect to this government's performance in conflict-of-interest matters.

First, this bill, this legislative approach, represents a stinging indictment of the conduct of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) by his own government. Under our legislative processes, under our traditions, it is the leader of the government, the Premier of this province, who is responsible for the standards of conflict of interest. Our Premier is responsible for the administration of the standards for conflict of interest of members of the executive council, and our Premier is responsible for the enforcement of those standards for those who would violate the guidelines for conflict of interest of members of the executive branch.

In all three, this Premier of this province stands indicted by this legislation for, first of all, his failure to deal with the standards themselves;

second, his abject failure to administer those standards; and third, for his failure to enforce those standards properly when they were clearly breached.

I want to review very briefly the performance of the Premier of this province on these matters. First, there is no doubt the Premier of this province was not even prepared to admit that in 1985 he had amended the 1971 guidelines introduced by Premier Davis. His statement to this House in the summer of 1986 indicated it was time that the 1971 Davis guidelines be reviewed. That was clearly his statement.

Nowhere in that statement, which was a lengthy and detailed one, did he even refer to the fact that the previous year his own government not only had reviewed the Davis guidelines of over a decade before but had in fact also established its own new guidelines, which were issued in September 1985. Nowhere in the statement of the Premier of this province, when he stated that he would review the Davis guidelines, did he once mention that there were new guidelines in place, nor did he once mention that he had undertaken this review in 1985, after coming to office.

His clear call to the members of this assembly was that it was time to review the Davis guidelines and come up with changes or amendments that would facilitate some reform in the whole conflict-of-interest area. Clearly, there was a rather glaring omission of fact from the statement of the Premier of this province on a very important issue current to the day that he made his statement, in the context of the resignation, or impending resignations, of two ministers of his cabinet over conflict-of-interest matters.

Second—and I am going to detail this from the documents that were available to the members of the standing committee on public accounts—the Premier of this province on numerous occasions during the summer of 1986 indicated the guidelines were being properly administered, that every “t” was crossed and every “i” was dotted; every teeny detail had been taken care of. Then two months later he appeared before the public accounts committee and indicated he really did not have any time to be bothered with this; he really never reviewed it, and in retrospect maybe he should have reviewed the compliance of his own ministers to the conflict-of-interest guidelines he had created.

What was the commitment by the Premier to enforcement in clear circumstances of conflict of interest? First, we had denial after denial after

denial. Second, we had delay after delay after delay in getting specific information and specific action taken by the government of the day. Those are well documented in the Hansard reports of the public accounts committee.

No audit was done of Wyda Systems. After we unanimously requested an audit in August and September 1986, after we publicly tabled a motion for an audit in late October 1986, still no audit was done until Wyda Systems closed its doors; then, after the fact, auditors were sent in to do an audit. We were promised an audit. In October 1986, we were promised an audit by the government, by the Liberal members of the committee, who announced an audit would be done. Guess what we got, two months later? A financial review; an unaudited financial review which took at face value the documents we already knew to exist.

I want to remind all members of the Legislative Assembly, particularly those members of the public accounts committee who sat through the entire Wyda investigation that involved alleged conflicts of interest with one Wilfred Caplan and his spouse, the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan), that we requested audited financial statements because we were convinced by the end of the day—all of us, Liberal, New Democrat, Conservative—that the debts of Wyda Systems that had been paid off through the government investment were in fact overvalued and overstated.

The members will recall that it was on April 10, 1986, at a meeting at the Inn on the Park with Mr. Caplan, Mr. Dobzinski and a representative of IDEA Corp., that the essential nature of the investment was changed a week before the closing of the deal. The essential nature was changed—and this was a unanimous finding of fact—to one of a debt payment system; the existing debts of Wyda Systems would be paid off using the government investment.

We became convinced, halfway through our deliberations, that the information supplied on a piece of paper that morning by Mr. Dobzinski and Mr. Caplan was not an accurate reflection of the true value of those debts. We asked for an audit. We never got one. We got delays and excuses from the Ontario Development Corp. Finally, after the company closed its doors, an audit was ordered.

Guess what the audit showed? It showed exactly what the members of the public accounts committee had warned the government of, seven months prior to this date.

Seven months prior, we had said we felt the debts were overvalued, that the assets were overvalued and that we had invested in the company as a government—a Liberal investment—and we were paying for debts that were not legitimate. That is exactly what the audit found. The assets were overvalued, the debts were overstated and \$1.7 million of the taxpayers' money was spent in 11 days, from April 19, 1986 to April 30, 1986. In 11 days, that money was put right through Wyda Systems out to the supposed creditors of the company, and that money was lost. The monthly budget of Wyda Systems went to \$500,000 a month in May 1986 and back down to \$175,000 a month in June 1986.

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These are all facts. The government refused to respond to the unanimous requests of the public accounts committee. It refused to provide for an audit. It refused a forensic audit. We now have an Ontario Provincial Police investigation going on as a result of the audit work that was done after the fact. There has been a totally inadequate, totally puzzling response from this government, which, given a unanimous request by the committee, failed to act. It failed to protect the investors' money and failed to protect the public's money in this investment, but that again is in line with the whole nature of the government response to this problem.

The Premier stated in the Legislature that a law firm, and one Mary Eberts, had been asked by the Premier—and there is some argument as to whether it was a retainer or a simple duty performed on request—that Mary Eberts and others had made this a priority and had advised members and prospective members of cabinet and that the conflict-of-interest guidelines had been adhered to; that every member of his cabinet and every member of the executive branch had filed specific information pursuant to the conflict-of-interest guidelines.

When information started to surface that in fact there had not been disclosure of certain holdings by certain members of the executive branch of his government, the Premier reacted by indicating that he would commission an independent review by Blake, Cassels and Graydon, a law firm in Toronto, of whether the filings had been properly done and whether there had been some omissions, a report which he subsequently refused to release to the committee and to the public. He stated, however, that the report exonerated his cabinet. The Blake, Cassels report exonerated the cabinet of the day of any breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines.

It was only after the members of the committee threatened to move for a Speaker's warrant to get production of the Blake, Cassels and Graydon report that the Premier relented. He did not offer it. He did not step forward with the information and take the members of the committee into his confidence. We had to force it from him.

I invite members to guess what it showed. It did not show, as the Premier said it showed, that every member of his cabinet was in compliance, that there had been no breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines. No, it did not show what the Premier said it showed. It showed massive breaches of disclosure, massive breaches of the conflict-of-interest guidelines by over 14 members of this cabinet. It was a document that was withheld from the public accounts committee until the Premier was threatened by the combined forces of the New Democratic Party and the Conservative Party. Only then was it produced. It said something completely different from what the Premier had said to the public and to the members of this assembly several weeks earlier.

This is the same Premier who denied in his statement to the Legislature that the 1985 guidelines even existed. He never referred to them. It was as if they did not exist. This is the same Premier who, when conflict-of-interest matters were drawn to his attention, indicated that he had completely investigated the matters and was satisfied there was no conflict of interest.

Mr. Polsinelli: How did the previous Tory government administer it?

Mr. Pope: I will get to that. In the meantime, we had two resignations offered by the ministers themselves—not demanded by the Premier, but offered by the ministers—because of breaches of the conflict-of-interest guidelines or their sensitivity to the position of the opposition members that they should not carry on their duties when these allegations of conflict of interest were outstanding.

But let us talk about what the Premier said, and for the members of the standing committee on public accounts, who I know are following this closely, I am referring to tab A, subsections 1 through 8, of the documents that were made available to the members of the public accounts committee.

First, on January 28, 1986, the member for Leeds (Mr. Runciman) made a request of the government. The question was:

"The government has been in power since last July...adequate time for cabinet ministers to disclose financial holdings that could cause

conflict of interest. As of last Friday, not one minister, including the Premier, had filed any disclosures with the Clerk of the House. When might we expect to see these documents?"

The answer from the Premier:

"My impression was that they were all filed. The member may know something I do not. I will check with the Clerk. He has no standing to speak in this House, but it is my impression that it has all been taken care of."

The Premier, in a subsequent answer:

"We had a very esteemed counsel from the law firm of Tory, Tory, DesLauriers and Binnington, which the member and his colleagues know well, look at this matter and check these things very closely."

Mr. Polsinelli: Is that a Tory firm? Tory, Tory is a good firm.

Mr. Pope: In fact, we are talking about Mary Eberts, who was a member of the Liberal transition team. That is who we are talking about.

Further from the Premier: "I will personally look into this." It had been looked into not only by independent counsel "but also by the legal official in the administration, the assistant deputy minister of civil matters, who is an authority on these things. He had seen all these things and they were all filed. If there is some technical misunderstanding, I will be very happy to check into it and clear it up."

The Premier, when told the matter had still not been filed, said:

"I told the honourable member, obviously these are things one takes very seriously in the construction of the cabinet. I can assure the member a great deal of attention was given to these matters last summer when I was in the process of making the decisions that I did.

"Extensive documentation was filed and, to the best of my knowledge, every little, tiny detail has been tied up and everything is as it should be, in conformity with the guidelines. I should point out that I have had legal opinions on that, so if he has any suggestions, if he is standing in the House and suggesting there is a conflict of interest somewhere, I will be delighted to hear his charge or allegation, but I do not think it is quite fair to stand up and make some blanket allegations in the absence of some facts."

That was the Premier's reaction: that every tiny, little detail was taken care of. This is what he said on January 28, 1986: that all the filings had been done, that he had had independent counsel, namely, Mary Eberts of the Liberal transition team, and the assistant deputy minister for the Attorney General review these matters

and that the filings had been made and properly made.

As we find out from the Blake, Cassels report, of course, the Premier could not have been farther from the truth. Not only were not all the filings made but also all the t's were not crossed, all the i's were not dotted, and in fact 14 cabinet ministers were in breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines.

So much for the reassuring words of the Premier of this province on January 28, 1986. So much for his words. So much for his assurances to the people of this province through his statements in the Legislature that he was taking proper care of the conflict-of-interest matter that was starting to surface.

The reality was that some eight months later, when the Premier appeared before the public accounts committee, he was forced to admit that in spite of his statements on January 28, 1986, that he had looked into this matter and everything was taken care of, he spent virtually no time on this matter.

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Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko) and the member for Yorkview (Mr. Polsinelli) are being particularly noisy. I am having trouble hearing the person who has the floor, the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope). Will you please desist from your interjections?

Mr. Pope: As I was saying, it was clear that the reassurances to the members of this Legislative Assembly and to the public of Ontario given on January 28, 1986, by the Premier of this province were not true. He had not taken care of this matter. His own report, the Blake, Cassels report, showed that 14 ministers were in violation of the conflict-of-interest guidelines for failing to disclose their holdings, including himself.

Mr. Polsinelli: Why don't you go through them, Alan?

Mr. Pope: I am going to.

Seven months later, the Premier was forced to appear before the standing committee on public accounts and admit that in spite of his statement on January 28 that he had this matter in hand, that he had taken care of it, in fact he had not spent much time on it. He had left it to Blenus Wright and someone else and maybe, in retrospect, he should not have. His statement before the public accounts committee was entirely different from

his first-line defence on January 28, 1986, which said he had taken care of it.

So much for the Premier's words. So much for the trust we can place in the Premier's words on this matter, like so many other matters in which this government is involved.

The next reference I want to make, and I know the members are following this closely, is to January 30, 1986, when the matter was raised again.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I have been listening carefully to the wording of the member for Cochrane South and he is dancing very close to certain lines with remarks such as the one about, "So much for the trust we can place in the Premier's words." You are getting very close to the line of being unparliamentary.

Mr. Polsinelli: He has been close to that line for years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pope: And so have a few other people who are in breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines. The Premier of this province took no steps to find out what was going on at the time or to ensure compliance, and that is close to the line because it involves public trust and confidence in the executive branch of this government. It is clear that the Premier was saying one thing when the reality was confessed some seven months later, that the matter had not been properly dealt with.

Is that on the other side now?

The Deputy Speaker: It is still on the all right side.

Hon. Mr. Curling: But we brought the bill forward.

Mr. Pope: I say to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) that the government brought the bill forward because it recognized that the Premier of this province cannot administer the guidelines, cannot enforce conflict of interest. He is going to hide behind an independent voice. The Premier does not want to do his job, a job that so many other Premiers did in the past. He does not want to do the job, and that is the problem. He does not want to accept responsibility. He is afraid it will stick to the Teflon suit he is wearing. Well, he has responsibility.

Ms. E. J. Smith: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I believe motives are being imputed in a completely ridiculous way here as to why this bill was introduced and what it represents in this House.

The Deputy Speaker: Which wording was imputing motive?

Ms. E. J. Smith: The member implied that the Premier was hiding behind this and doing it to cover an inadequate job.

The Deputy Speaker: That is still in order. I do not think motives were imputed beyond what is parliamentary. I do agree we are dancing close to the line.

Mr. Pope: Maybe the government whip will read the statements of the Premier to the public accounts committee. He admitted that he was not monitoring to ensure compliance, that he did not want to get involved in the administration of conflict-of-interest guidelines and that he did not want to get involved in enforcement, even though clearly, under our parliamentary tradition, it is his obligation on behalf of the public to do so.

It is his statements before the public accounts committee that condemn him for his failure to properly administer conflict-of-interest guidelines. They are not my words; they are his. He said that he would not want to do it, did not want to do it and did not do it, that he should have spent more time on it. It is his own confession that stands as an indictment of this bill. That is why the government is doing this right now, because the Premier appeared before the public accounts committee and said he did not do the job on behalf of the people and someone else should do it because he was not prepared to.

Mr. Polsinelli: Will the member for Cochrane South permit a question?

The Deputy Speaker: Will the member for Cochrane South permit a question?

Mr. Polsinelli: It is a simple question. As a member of the public accounts committee, did the member for Cochrane South not endorse the legislation introduced covering conflict of interest and is his real fear not that this legislation will also cover members of the opposition parties?

Mr. Pope: My real fear is that this government, given its track record, has never taken matters of conflict of interest seriously. It has forced the public accounts committee and members of this assembly to expose what has been going on; it has never properly applied its own guidelines it put in place in September 1985, has never made them a priority and never took proper steps to enforce and administer them adequately. It tried, whenever it could, to deny to the people of Ontario there was a problem. That is what is going on. That is what is unfair and inappropriate in the conduct of this government on this matter.

My next reference is to the Legislative Assembly proceedings on January 31. We then

deal with the then Minister of Northern Development and Mines and the reference to the interest in Hearst Forest Management and the blind trust.

This is the Premier again: "The minister said yesterday"—referring to the then Minister of Northern Development and Mines—"that he instructed his lawyers to put all of his interests in a blind trust, which I assume was done. It took some time to work out the legal technicalities and it was all turned over to Mr. Blenus Wright, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, who acts in these matters. He makes the decision when to file, and then they are turned over to the Clerk at some point that is appropriate in his judgement. This was the traditional method employed by the former administration.

"It is all going to be available to the public, and the member is welcome to spend as much time as he wants in scurrying through it trying to find some suggestion of conflict of interest. He can put his mind to it because obviously he cannot find anything else constructive to do here."

That was the attitude of the Premier, that at some point in time the public might have a right to know, when Mr. Blenus Wright was allowed to file the documents.

My next reference is to February 3, 1986. A question was directed to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) and all we got on that day was an assurance that there were no problems with the conflict-of-interest matter, that there was nothing for the public to be concerned about and that all had been proceeded with in the normal course. Of course, the Legislative Assembly committee took that particular matter in hand and its finding now are a matter of public record. The findings are clearly contrary to the statements made on that day by the Minister of Natural Resources.

Then on June 10, 1986, a question was raised by the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) with respect to IDEA Corp. and two investments, Graham Software Corp. and Wyda Systems (Canada) Inc. The Premier's response again was typical of the Premier in these kinds of circumstances during the year 1986, and I quote:

"My honourable friend has been standing in this House and coming very close to making allegations I suspect he would not make outside it. I have never heard of this guy Graham. I think the member as a gentleman should have the honour not to participate in the sleazy politics I have seen from some of his colleagues. It is amazing to see a young man, who is supposed to be filled with some ideals, being sucked into the gutter the way he is."

In fact, the allegations the member for Brantford made that day, and I refer the members of this House to page 1305 of Hansard, in every detail were found to be true. All we had in reaction from the Premier of this province was an attack on the character of the member for Brantford. That was his first line of defence, to attack the messenger, to attribute motives to the member who was raising legitimate concerns in this House relating to conflict of interest on matters that turned out to be true. His allegations turned out to be true. We have the Premier, representing all the people of this province, whose only answer is not to get at the truth, his only response is to attack the member who raised these legitimate questions.

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And then, on reconsideration with his staff, there was a more thoughtful response on June 11. First, he indicated that IDEA Corp. had been established under the previous government and that the members of the board of directors of IDEA Corp. were eminent Ontarians. Then he indicates that all will be surprised by the allegations the member for Brantford had made. Then he gives a breakdown of the nature of IDEA Corp. since the very beginning.

He then makes some statements that I think do not stand up to public scrutiny and that I want to quote: "With respect to the two specific cases raised by my honourable friend opposite, the following are the facts. Graham Software Corp. initially contacted the IDEA Corp. in the summer of 1985. It received initial funding from IDEA on September 18, with an option for future investment, which was later exercised after a thorough review of the application by the staff. It is my information that Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Graham had no business relationship at the time of the application, having severed their business relationship three years previously."

Of course, the members of the standing committee on public accounts now know that was not the case. It was not the case that they had severed their business relationship three years previously. In fact, at the very time they made the application they still had on the books of the companies branch of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations ongoing business relationships in at least five different corporate entities that were not wound down or were not disentangled until after the application.

"The application of Wyda Systems (Canada) was made to the corporation in August 1985, following preliminary discussions with staff. Prior to these events, in June 1985, the Assistant

Deputy Attorney General, civil law, had a general discussion with Mr. Caplan concerning conflict-of-interest matters as part of an ongoing process to advise Liberal members and their spouses. Mr. Caplan mentioned that he was president of Damaza Consultants Ltd., a financial consulting firm. He stated that from time to time he might act as a consultant for companies that had applied to ministries or government agencies for grants or loans.

"Mr. Caplan was advised that, pursuant to the conflict-of-interest guidelines, a minister of the crown, which included the spouse of a minister, could not have an interest in a private company that had a contract or agreement with the government. He was advised that he would be precluded from"—seeking—"an interest in the equity of a client company seeking funds from the government or any interest based on the amount of funds received from the government. He was also advised that the member for Oriole, as a minister, should have absolutely nothing to do with any decision on whether any client of Mr. Caplan received government funding.

"In the opinion of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, civil law, Mr. Caplan has complied with these guidelines.

"At the time of application and approval of the Wyda proposal, Mr. Caplan was listed by Wyda as a financial consultant and given the title of vice-president, finance. The application was made in the summer of 1985, placed on the IDEA board agenda for February 19, 1986...approved on March 6, 1986. Mr. Caplan's relationship to Wyda was disclosed by Mr. Macdonald"—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order. You are reading at great length.

Mr. Pope: And? I can read from Hansard.

The Acting Speaker: This is not—

Mr. Pope: Fine, I will put it down and I will reconstruct Hansard myself then. Okay, let us talk about what the reality was as opposed to what the Premier said that day.

First, I have indicated he was wrong on the relationship between Terry Graham and Abe Schwartz. He was clearly wrong on the records contained in his own government's ministry, at the companies branch of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations; and it is clear he was totally wrong with respect to the relationship between Mr. Caplan and Wyda Systems (Canada) Inc., found to be wrong unanimously by every single member of the standing committee on public accounts.

He was not given the title of vice-president of finance: he was an officer of the company, he

was vice-president of finance and administration. He was not told he could not have an equity interest: he was told in a letter from Tory, Tory, DesLauriers and Binnington, by Mary Eberts, a member of the Liberal transition team, to sever his relationship. That is what he was told to do, to sever the relationship. We had this cockamammy interpretation of the meaning of the words "sever the relationship" that Mary Eberts and others attempted to convince the public accounts committee meant to change the nature of the relationship. The public accounts committee, in its unanimous finding, was rather kind. It said that interpretation was unique at best because the reality was that Wilf Caplan was told to sever the relationship, to end it, to get out of the relationship and in fact did not.

Nowhere in the Premier's statement is there a reference to a very important meeting that took place on April 10, 1986; that the committee unanimously found took place, that the committee unanimously found involved Mr. Caplan, Mr. Dobzinski and an employee of IDEA Corp. The committee unanimously found decisions had been made at that meeting that changed the essential nature of the investment.

The committee also examined the actual notes of that meeting, in which the supposed debts and assets of the corporation were listed on a single piece of paper. That was on April 10. Nine days later, without going back to the board, the deal, having had its essential nature changed, closed. Eleven days after that about half of the \$3 million was paid to Wyda and then out of Wyda to a variety of creditors, including almost \$500,000 to the president personally for what were called shareholders' loans. That was the deal negotiated on the morning of April 10, 1986, at the Inn on the Park with Mr. Caplan, Mr. Dobzinski and an employee of IDEA Corp.

Those are the facts, the unanimous finding of facts. That is a far cry from the statements of the Premier on June 11, 1986, a far cry from what we were told was the reality of this matter.

The Premier made further statements to which I will not refer on June 12, 1986, in which he attacked the member for Brantford for impugning the integrity of people from outside the Legislature. I reiterate that in reality the member for Brantford was correct in every single statement and allegation he made to this House in June 1986 and throughout this entire matter. He was factually correct and was unanimously found to be factually correct by the members of this Legislature in the public accounts committee.

It was only after sustained questioning by both opposition parties through June 1986 and a threat by the combined opposition parties to refer this matter to the public accounts committee that the government House leader and Deputy Premier (Mr. Nixon) rose in this House and said the government was initiating a referral to the public accounts committee. The reality was that the House leader had been told earlier that day that the combined opposition parties were going to move that the whole matter be referred to the public accounts committee. It was in the light of that information, conveyed by the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) on behalf of his party and the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) on behalf of the Conservative Party, that the government responded.

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Let us disavow ourselves of the notion that the government voluntarily moved on this matter, that it was open and that it provided all the information immediately to the members of this assembly. That did not happen. There was a statement and, for whatever reason, it was incomplete and in some aspects inaccurate.

It may be that the Premier and his office did not have time to review the matter properly. They should have taken the time. It may be that they did not get all the information that was available from the files. They should have had access to all the files and they should have insisted on access to all the files. It may be that the Premier's office, for some strange reason that Mary Eberts tried to explain, did not have the dossiers on all the members of cabinet and the executive council and therefore could not review the matter unless they got the permission of Mary Eberts or the members of cabinet themselves. It turns out that they should have got that permission immediately, because the Blake, Cassels report showed that there was a great deal wrong, there was a great deal of nondisclosure of assets.

In reality, it was on September 14, 1972, that Premier Davis outlined to the Legislature of this province a comprehensive set of guidelines. The new government, when it assumed power in 1985, did review the guidelines that were produced by Premier Davis. They did publish new guidelines, and ministers did violate those new guidelines.

I do not think there is any doubt of that matter, in retrospect. Having been given the information that members of the public accounts committee have been given and the members of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, under the chairmanship of the member for Oshawa

(Mr. Breagh), and that therefore all members of this assembly have had access to, it is clear that the conflict-of-interest guidelines of September 1985 were violated, that there was a contractual involvement between a company that a minister or his or her family had an interest in, that the contractual involvement involved services rendered to Wyda Systems for the negotiation of a government investment, and that those negotiations actually took place, involving a spouse of a cabinet minister, on April 10, 1986, and well before that, in December 1985 and January 1986.

It is clear those meetings took place. It is clear as to who was present at those meetings. It is clear the IDEA Corp. staff at those meetings knew who Mr. Caplan was, knew who his spouse was and knew they were dealing with the spouse of a cabinet minister of the Peterson government of Ontario. That is clear from all the information we have been given.

We know Mr. Caplan was paid for his services. There is some argument as to whether or not he had other duties to perform for Wyda Systems, as well as being involved in preparing financial information that was used to support this application. It is clear that in any event, regardless of how we define his duties, whether they involved other things or not, he was paid for his services.

We found unanimously that he received payment. He was paid, I believe, \$2,000 a month, on average. In the early part of 1986, around the time that the deal was finalized, his payments, or severance package or however you want to define it in technical terms, started to be \$8,000 a month. Of those payments, the first payment was made on the day that the government cheque was given to Wyda Systems Inc. That very day, the first \$8,000 payment was made to a spouse of a cabinet minister.

That is not my partisan opinion; that is a unanimous finding of fact, that is documented. That is documented in the book that I know all members of the public accounts committee will remember for ever more. It is a documented payout between April 19 and April 30, 1986.

It is truly the failure of this government to properly police these kinds of activities that led the standing committee on public accounts through the summer of 1986, and the Legislative Assembly committee through that same period of time, into extensive hearings.

It is clear that having a problem on its hands, the government responded in a way that I think even it, in retrospect, would think was inadvisable. That is putting it charitably. We had to

force the government to refer this matter to the public accounts committee. We had to indicate in the public accounts committee that we expected the Premier to attend. We had to threaten the Premier's office with Speaker's warrants to get access to information that we should have had immediately.

We demanded an audit. We were refused by the Ontario Development Corp., acting on instructions. When they did relent—and I suspect they relented because of pressure from the Liberal members of the public accounts committee—we did not get an audit at all; but they never told us it was not an audit until the day they produced at an in camera meeting what was in fact a financial review.

The financial review took all of the information we already knew, as members of the committee, and just rearranged the numbers in different columns—same numbers, but in different columns—and tried to explain it to us. What we had been calling for since August was a forensic audit that would go beyond the financial statements, go beyond the documents and verify their truth. Verify, for instance, whether or not computer equipment that was assigned a value of millions of dollars was, in fact, only worth a couple of hundred thousand dollars.

We asked, for instance, for the production—and we know they exist—of the customs documents, because that equipment came from England to New York City, through New York state into Ontario. We asked for the valuation on the customs documents. The customs documents, to this day, have not been produced for the members of the committee.

But we did get, in court documents and in statements by Mr. MacKinnon of the Ontario Development Corp., the admission that we were probably right, the computer equipment was worth many times less than the stated value. I remind the members that stated value was used in obtaining government funds and in flowing government funds through Wyda Systems (Canada) Inc. to related creditors.

I want to emphasize that, "to related creditors." Those are creditors who had some ongoing business relationship with Mr. Dobzinski and/or Wyda Systems. They were two London, England, corporations. We were aware of their relationship. We were aware of the fact that the two corporations had the same answering service and that they had the same building—although they faced on different sides of the building—for their business addresses.

We were aware that there was a long-standing relationship between Mr. Dobzinski and Wyda Systems with those two companies. We were aware that hundreds of thousands of dollars were being claimed by those two companies for computer equipment on lease contracts, and yet the government refused to move on a forensic audit until the company folded up and until the \$3 million was lost.

We did not get co-operation. We had to drag this government, kicking and screaming, into an admission that there had been mistakes made, an admission to the fact that there had been breaches of the conflict-of-interest guidelines. Now we have an Ontario Provincial Police investigation, quite frankly—and we will tell it now—with which the members of the public accounts committee from the opposition parties threatened the government, in camera in September 1986, unless we had an audit done.

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It was only after those threats were made that the government said, "Yes, we will do an audit." When it came down in October, in reality it was a financial review and not an audit at all. Now we have an OPP investigation that the government was forced to do because of the facts of the fall of Wyda Systems. Guess what we have now? All of a sudden, we cannot find out from the OPP the status of the investigation. All of a sudden, no one knows where the report is, even though the OPP has all the transcripts of the standing committee on public accounts hearings, all the documents that the public accounts committee had.

How long ago was the report started? It was started six months ago and we still have no response from the government. We still have no response from the OPP, who originally were giving us information on the status of the investigation and who, suddenly, two months ago said: "We cannot give you any more information. You will have to put your request in writing." Tell me about this government that is so open and co-operative in these and so many other matters. The reality is that the co-operation and the openness was not there and never has been there from the outset in the Wyda Systems matter.

How is the bill going to change that? If the government is not going to be forthcoming, if it is going to force the opposition parties to bring these matters to a public accounts committee, if it is going to refuse to produce the documents while giving the media and the people of Ontario its own interpretation of them, which turns out to be

inaccurate, if it is not going to carry out legitimate audits and forensic audits of these matters to see whether the taxpayers' money is being wasted, if it is not going to do all those basics of good fundamental government, of good husbanding of the taxpayers' money, how can an independent commissioner get any further than the opposition parties with this government when we have this history of lack of co-operation and forthrightness by the government of this Premier?

To me it is very clear. This bill is proof of the failure of this government, historically since it came to office, to take care of this very important issue. Not only that, it is an indication of the intention of the government not to involve itself ever again in conflict-of-interest matters. They will give it to somebody else because they do not want it. They will allow some independent commissioner to deal with conflict-of-interest matters.

I want to say I do not think that is appropriate. I happen to believe that the fundamental responsibility for conflict-of-interest guidelines, for their administration and enforcement, rests with the individual ministers of the government and, more important, rests with the Premier, the leader of this government. That is historic tradition in our parliamentary system.

It is something that this Premier, uniquely, does not want to get involved in, and I think that is not to his credit. Notwithstanding his admission last summer to the public accounts committee that he thought someone else should do it, that does not remove from his shoulders ultimate responsibility for the consequences of a breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines.

I think the Premier should be here, should involve himself in this debate, as the leader of this government that has had so much trouble with conflict-of-interest matters. I think the Premier should be here to explain to the members of this assembly how, in the light of subsequent events, the information that we received on January 28, 1986, is so different from the findings of fact of all members of all parties of the standing committee on public accounts and the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

I think we deserve an explanation from this Premier, which we have never had, as to why the Legislative Assembly committee and the public accounts committee, which I am aware of particularly, had to fight this government every step of the way to get the Blake, Cassels report,

to get an audit done, to get information out of the Premier's office.

By the way, we still do not have Bob Carman's documentation. We still do not have the documentation of his advice to the Premier, in spite of the promise of the Premier that he would be open and co-operative with the members of the standing committee on public accounts. We will never see that information, because the Premier has decided we should not see it. Will the independent commissioner see it?

I believe there are some rather substantial issues that go to the very heart of the performance of this Premier and this government on conflict-of-interest matters that are still not finished. We still have the OPP investigation, and we read some suggestion in the paper today that there may be charges forthcoming from a justice of the peace with respect to the hearings of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

We still have not finished with this matter. This piece of legislation will not deter the members of the public accounts committee from finding out what actually happened to the public's money. That is our mandate as members of the public accounts committee. That is what we spent three months determining in the summer of 1986. Clearly, the Premier has never made it a priority of his or his government to find out what happened and to make sure it never happens again.

By giving his responsibility, the responsibility that is uniquely the Premier's, to someone else, he is abdicating one of his fundamental responsibilities as the leader of the government of this province. He is abdicating it because he does not want to do it, because he does not want the political heat, because he does not want the political consequences.

There is more to governing than wearing a teflon suit and a red tie. There is an obligation to take care of the basics of parliamentary democracy, of democratic government. One of the basic obligations is that the Premier is ultimately responsible for the conduct of his ministers. He is the one who must insist on the resignations when they are in breach of the conflict-of-interest guidelines. He is the one who has to take the time to find out what is going on with his ministers. He is the one who has to make sure the system is properly administered.

On each and every one of those counts, the Premier not only has not co-operated, not only said things that turned out not to be correct, but also is now abdicating his responsibility and saying, "I do not want it any more." That is an

indictment of this Premier's attitude towards this place and towards parliamentary democracy that I cannot accept.

Mr. Breaugh: I rise to support the bill, with some reluctance. I think all members on just about all sides in here have had a round of conflict of interest one way or another. For many of us, last summer was perhaps the most difficult one we have had in quite a while. In that period, we dealt with two major conflict-of-interest allegations in a parliamentary forum, before a legislative committee. In our federal Parliament, they have used another technique, a royal commission of sorts, to investigate allegations of conflict of interest.

It seems that more and more people in the public eye are having their intentions questioned. I happened to be off sick for the last day or so and I was able to watch CNN's coverage of Jerry Falwell's press conference yesterday morning. Then I got to watch Nightline last night, where Jim and Tammy Bakker were giving their side of the story. At the end of it, neither side looks very gracious or very Christian or seems to benefit by the process.

Gary Hart, a candidate for presidential nomination in the United States, has gone through a similar set of allegations and has now resigned from that. It seems that more and more scrutiny is being placed on those who are in the public eye.

The previous speaker was correct. In our traditions in a parliament, we have always said that all members are honourable, that they do not participate in things from which they might gain personal profit, that there is kind of a code of the west that applies to members of the assembly and, essentially, that is in the hands of the Premier.

In this chamber, traditionally it has been something the previous government codified in the sense that it had a policy of cabinet, a set of guidelines, which were reasonably well known, I suppose, to members of the cabinet but certainly not the subject of debate in the Legislature. They were not guidelines determined by their peers; they were guidelines established by the Premier of Ontario. The Premier essentially said, "You must conform to this set of guidelines." In the end, it was essentially this. The Premier of Ontario decided what was right and what was wrong. He decided who was guilty and who was not guilty.

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I do not recall an occasion in my experience here as a member when the previous government ever let a legislative committee scrutinize wheth-

er somebody had violated those conflicts. The Premier made that decision solely on his own and, for the most part, the Premier has tended to be quite ruthless. If there was the hint of an allegation, as soon as it became apparent that it was not going to go away, that the allegation was going to remain a matter of public scrutiny for some time period, the minister resigned.

The minister very often reappeared from limbo six months, a year or two years later, but there was the perception of swift justice, that if the members of the cabinet did not behave as the Premier expected them to behave they were gone. If they were big, strong folks they would reappear at a later date.

I have some problems with this bill. I want to spend a little bit of time this afternoon talking about them.

The first problem I have with the bill, frankly, is the name of it. This bill is to deal with conflict of interest and the perception of that in the public's mind. In my view, it is not then an advantage to call the bill An Act to provide for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office.

I am an advocate of the view that if you want to do something, you should call it by something that the rest of the world will really understand. This seems, in my view, to obfuscate the issue. It does not tell you what it is supposed to do. That is the fault with it. I do not think the government does itself a favour when it starts off by saying, "We are going to open up this process and we are going to codify it in legislation. It will be so straightforward that there will never again be a conflict of interest."

In the first place, I think the government has done itself a disservice by the title of the act. It would have been much better off simply to say, "We are going to put into law conflict-of-interest legislation and that is what this will be." Then the public would understand what the government is trying to do, and so would we.

The second flaw I see in the bill is its approach. The way to categorize it is that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has attempted to do this from the lawyer's point of view. He has written a bill that says, "If you file this document with this person and you provide us with this list of things and you fulfil all these legal obligations, you will escape the conflict."

I do not believe that is true, not for a minute. I do not believe this is about whether people filed pieces of paper on time. I do not think it is about

whether they completed the form properly. I do not think it is about whether they got good legal advice. I think it is all about whether the public perceives that something was done improperly. It is as simple as that and it needs to be no more complicated than that.

Members of my committee have had an opportunity to study various American jurisdictions and their attempts to codify this. They really go at it hammer and tongs down there in ways we would find totally reprehensible. It is standard practice in many states of the union that if you are even nominated to hold a public position, there will be a complete investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of your whole background and a complete and open audit of all tax records and an auditing of all the records of all your family, in a way that is very un-Canadian, let me put it that way.

The Americans have accepted that. It is a part of their political way of life. If you are running for public office or if you are going to be appointed to an important public post, virtually all of the documents about you, your family and your connections will in some way become public documents. They may not start out that way, but it seems almost inevitable that if somebody really wants to get this information, there is a statement on public record. You can put it before a congressional committee or you can use their freedom of information laws, but it all comes out. There will be detailed records of what was made in a given year, where it was made, and all of that.

They have their own reasons for doing so. I was interested in the last year to talk to some people from Congress about their pay raises. The House may be aware that members of the American Congress have gone through a rather dramatic pay increase in the past year, and they have a good rationale for it. They had just gone through a long period where members of Congress made it a practice not to pay themselves very much; certainly not to give themselves a pay increase.

But members of Congress had always made it a practice, too, to accept money for speaking engagements, to begin to work for lobbying groups, to work for private industry, to go and address a convention in Hawaii and stay on for a week or so at the company resort. Many of them made a very good living on the side, doing what each one of us does every night of the year, although we do not do it in quite such glamorous places.

They give a speech to somebody for which they are compensated and they make that part of the public record. It was beginning to become a problem. In many senses, they had fulfilled all their obligations; in a sense, they would fit very nicely into this kind of legislation, because they had all filed the documents saying, "I got \$5,000 from this company to do this, I got \$10,000 from this company to do this and I got this kind of money from this lobbyist group over here." They filed all that information, but the conflict persists.

That is one of the difficulties that is in here. There is a legalistic attempt to codify what kind of information members should put on record, where the list should go, who should see copies of the list, what the commissioner does, what kind of advice is given to the individual members and particularly members of the cabinet. I do not think it gets right on the problem of the public's perception.

I want to point out some areas where I think we need to do two or three things. When the bill goes off to committee I am going to at least talk about this if not move some amendments in these areas.

The first major problem I have is that there is an exemption in here for members voting on their own salary. I think we have to deal with this problem head on, maybe not in this act maybe in another act, but we must find a way to deal with that problem in a straightforward, upfront manner and get rid of it; get that conflict of interest, which is not just a perception but a real one, out of the way and dealt with.

The second thing is I noticed there was an attempt in here to get away from divesting, that is that at some point in time people will have to recognize that no matter how you use a blind trust, no matter how you put your assets under someone else's control, the perception of a conflict of interest will remain. I believe we cannot escape that.

I do not believe that in all circumstances members have to divest themselves of an interest, say in the family farm, but I do think that option must remain a viable one. The commissioner will at some point in time have to say to some member of this assembly: "You have to get rid of the stocks in that company. You have to get rid of your share of the ownership of that firm. You have to divest yourself of those interests."

I am not advocating that it always has to be that way, but I am saying there are certain conflicts that will not go away unless the member no longer has an interest in that piece of property or that firm or that asset, whatever it might be. I

think that is something that has to be in here as well. Other jurisdictions have taken a shot at this.

I am supporting the legislation for these reasons. I believe the old rule of the west that all honourable members are honourable and would never do anything wrong is not standing us in very good stead these days. It is not good enough for me any more to say, "Somebody broke a guideline." You either did something right, in which case you have nothing to be ashamed of; or you did something wrong, in which case, like most other citizens, you should have broken a law. That again has been our problem.

As we went through the hearings last summer, this same frustration kept surfacing in both the legislative committees: first, people may have broken some guidelines but they did not break any laws. People were interested in the status of the guidelines and the status of legal opinions given to members of the cabinet who were filing certain documents.

I think, too, mention has to be made that somehow we have to make the distinction here between what is important to do and what is not so important. I do not think it is important that members, particularly members of the cabinet, forgot to file certain pieces of paper—that is barely relevant in my view—or that there were irregularities in the filing in that they did not give complete information. What is important is that there is on the public record a clear indication of where the conflicts might arise and a clear indication as well of how the member, the Legislature or the commissioner in this instance handles that conflict of interest. This is not easy water.

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For example, in Quebec they have done something reasonably similar to this proposal. The commissioner was set up. First of all, he advises the members on how to make these declarations. He then handles whether there are conflicts. As long as you stick with the commissioner and follows his directions, other members are not supposed to ask questions about this. It is considered to be a legitimate defence that the member rises in his place and says, "That is under the consideration of the commissioner and he gave me proper advice and I have followed his advice." As long as you do that, that is your protection.

I am not sure that is an absolute solution here. I recognize that it seems to be working reasonably well for them, but I think under this proposal we are going to have some problems with that. I am not quite sure that members of this assembly are

going to be prepared to say that the member followed some advice. Certainly last summer during the committee hearings where it was repeatedly stated that legal advice had been sought it was not good enough for committee members.

It was not good enough for members of the cabinet or former members of the cabinet to come before legislative committees and say: "I was just doing what I was told. I got some legal advice from this person, that person and the other person and I thought I had done what was expected of me." Members were not really attributing a whole lot of motives, but that was not seen as a good response. You had to do more than that.

I think in part this bill suffers from a bit of that. What this bill does, which I think is quite good, is at least it lays out a beginning format; at least it provides that there will be some kind of recognition that a commissioner is in charge of all this, the same advice will be given to all members and the same rules apply to all members. I think that is fair.

It has been a problem to date that we did not pay much attention to these conflict-of-interest guidelines. There was no one person who was designated really to take charge of this. There was a civil servant, in fact two or three, who did portions of this process in terms of providing advice. Some received documents and tabled them with the clerk and others reviewed and advised various members, but there was not really a job to be done.

This was done occasionally and, in part I suppose because one political party was in power for a rather lengthy period of time, they just kind of assumed they knew how to rule the roost. They assumed they knew how to advise members and they knew how to get them out of hot water. To be blunt about it, they wrote the rules the way they wanted them, and because there were guidelines laid down by the Office of the Premier and not laid down by the Legislative Assembly, members here had no handle on that. The Premier was judge, jury, adviser and all those things rolled into one.

When a new government came into place it stumbled over the process. I do not think that is being unkind either. In the committee deliberations I thought there was a reasonable amount of openness, certainly on the part of the two members who were alleged to have had a conflict and others who testified before the committees, that there was new ground being broken here, that there had been a review of the guidelines. No one quite knew how to do all of this. There was a

transition team in place that was not a permanent part of the government's bureaucracy. They were brought in for the most part on a part-time basis from the private sector or from other ministries to get the new cabinet in place.

I think too, to be fair, the expectations that were put on brand-new members of this Legislative Assembly were unreal. People who had never seen the place before were suddenly now members of the assembly and, more than that, some of them were members of cabinet. They did not know how this place worked because they had never been here before. There was a totally unreal set of expectations laid upon them and nobody was really in charge.

Certainly in the committee that I chaired, the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, a new member was brought in and given a whole set of expectations that were totally unrealistic. He was given some advice on some occasions and no advice on others. There was no follow-up to the filing of what, in this instance, turned out to be some rather important information. There was no codification of a system. There was very little follow-up of the system. There was very little consistency, I would say, in the kind of legal advice that was given to members of the cabinet.

This bill may, I hope, straighten out that part of the process. What is missing and what may be difficult for us to capture is the understanding of the public, the perception that we now have a process at work to handle this.

I want to say a couple of words about the processes we have used so far, and perhaps it is a bit of a defence that this technique may be a little bit better. As somebody who spent some time last summer, more time than I cared to, going through a process of hearing these allegations, I have come to the conclusion that there are some things that a legislative committee has a very difficult time doing. Hearing allegations of this kind is one of those things.

In my own committee, which has striven over the years to be as nonpartisan as committees can be here—let me put it that way—there are no illusions that we are not members of a political party, but the committee has worked very hard, because of the nature of the work it usually does: the standing orders, reviewing agencies, all that kind of stuff. There is an occasion, and members rather relish that occasion, to set aside their partisan differences and not to deal with the work along party lines. We really did try, during the course of the hearings we had, to stay on that

nonpartisan basis; but it is almost impossible to do.

Although in my committee we did not quite have the bitterness perhaps that the other committee had, at the end of a long effort I am not sure that we were able to do that. In the end, the nature of the allegations was very partisan and the process itself was very partisan, so it was very difficult to steer clear of partisanship. We tried, and I think we succeeded to some degree, but in the end I think most of us would have said: "Don't ever give us a job like that to do again. Find some other way of doing that."

The alternative that we know of is to strike a royal commission and to run that route. I do not know what Sinclair Stevens would say about his treatment under the royal commission process. Having been thoroughly publicized in the way his allegation was for a lengthy period of time, I suspect he may not be very happy with it. Certainly if you were cost-conscious you would not be very happy with that process.

I am not so sure, if you were a great fan of the judicial system, that you would be really happy that lawyers on both sides went at it hammer and tongs for a lengthy period of time and the whole proceeding was televised. The public really paid a lot of money for this, and I am not sure that it served any truly useful purpose. I am not sure that there was more fairness there than what members got before our legislative committees, with a great deal less public expenditure.

Of the two processes that we know I am really not very happy with either one of them. I am not sure that, in the long run, we are going to be thoroughly thrilled with this process either, but I will say this: at least it lays out a common framework; it has a reasonably neutral person, the commissioner, providing advice and adjudicating as a first try.

Will it stop the allegations? I doubt that very much. As long as I have been a member here there have been allegations of this kind put on the record during question period, for example, and pursued very aggressively by opposition parties and sometimes by the government: that somebody got something as a favour, that somebody was in a position to lobby someone else. I do not know that we will ever get away from those allegations. As long as there is a political appointment made somewhere, as long as there is a contract let, as long as governments build roads and buildings and give jobs to people, allegations of favouritism and conflict of interest will probably persist.

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What we do not have is a fair, reasoned way to deal with those allegations. This bill attempts to do that. It attempts to codify; it attempts to put in place a process that deals with conflict of interest. How I wish the person who drafted the bill had said it in those plain words, then we would have something to work with.

I think it misses the mark, though I am aware the Attorney General is considering separate legislation to deal with lobbyists. I would be happy to entertain that discussion, and I want to get into that when we go to committee. But if, for example, he thinks he can solve this problem by making members of the assembly file pieces of paper, he is wrong. If there is not a way to register or at least to identify people who function as lobbyists—and this is a growth industry in this country now—he is in trouble.

I think we had better deal with that, whether we deal with it as part of this bill, and I would be happy to propose some amendments to do just that in a very simple form, just to have them register; or whether he wants to deal with it in separate legislation, which is also acceptable to me as long as I see it and we have some indication of what the government's plans are, that is fine too.

I do not think we can let it slide. The government needs to investigate this from as many angles as it can. I think, in its final form, they cannot escape the fact that they cannot expect from cabinet members anything any different or anything they would not expect from all other members. In other words, this is a group of peers, and if the rules apply to members of cabinet, who may have a slightly different angle on this—I would not deny for a moment that they may be in positions where they could have more conflicts or where the conflicts would be more apparent to the public; they may be in a position to give government contracts in a more direct way—I think the rules have to apply to all members equally.

In other words, I advocate that members of the cabinet should not be practising law two days a week in private practice. I also advocate that members should not be doing that either. I get very angry when expectations are placed on me as a member that seem to be totally lost on everybody else. I am not happy to spend a lot of time in committee during the summer, but I am a lot more unhappy when some other member of the assembly who gets paid just as much money as I do is off practising law, running a business or dabbling his little toes in the lake; all of which are

probably reasonable occupations during the summertime, but I think there has to be some fairness here.

These rules have to apply to all members of the Legislative Assembly, and I do not believe there can be part-time members of this assembly any more. I know it is possible and it is not a new phenomenon either. I know there has been criticism, for example, of a good number of Conservative members who have now gone back into private practice somewhere or gotten a job and have retained their seats for a bit. I do not think we have a good way to resolve that, but I think we have to draw the line.

I think the process has to be started now that people cannot purport to be doing their job in the assembly when they are somewhere else and that all members have a right to live or die by the same rules, so to speak. If you are an elected member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, I believe that precludes you from holding another job. If you are a member of the cabinet, I think that is particularly true, but I believe any member of the assembly should not be working for a law firm or a business or carrying on his profession, and I would caution members that the moment they are a bit slipshod about that they get themselves into a very dangerous field.

If it is fair for some members of the assembly to hold an outside job, it seems logical to me that one of the things they will get into sooner or later is advising certain groups on how to deal with governments, which at first blush sounds fairly harmless, except that it becomes a lobbyist position. Then we will find that the lobbyists not only are advocating a point of view to other members but are also sitting in judgement from time to time on whether that particular group of people gets the regulations put together in a certain way that is to their advantage, or gets a law drafted in a way that is to their advantage and is then getting payment for doing just that.

We all do this all the time. I believe it is part of our job as members of the assembly. We advocate for groups, and that is fine as long as we are not getting paid or charging people to do that. As long as we see that as our role as a member, there is nothing wrong with it. But, for example, the moment I start charging compensation people who come to my office and say: "Fine, I will do a little compensation work for you at the Workers' Compensation Board; you owe me 20 bucks for consultation fees," I would see that as being quite outrageously wrong; and that is the road we are on.

I think we have to be a little tougher than this bill. It needs to cover a little more territory. It has to say something about the lobbying industry; we have to get started on that process now before we have a big problem. I do not perceive that we have a big problem now, but the time to write the rules about that is before we have one, not after the fact.

We have to say this bill has to apply to all members in a very straightforward way. I do not think we can have exclusions on that. We have to deal with the conflicts that are there now and that we perceive will be there in the very foreseeable future, and we have to do that in a way that grabs the public's perception. The public has to feel that the government of Ontario has moved to provide a law and that the law is clear and straightforward. If I have a difficulty with this bill, it is simply that this bill is not clear and straightforward. It begins with a rather obtuse title. As one goes through the bill, it makes a lot of sense, I suppose, if one is a lawyer, but if one is a layperson, it does not.

I want to remind the government that the purpose of this bill is not to make the lawyers happy. The purpose of this bill ought to be to make the public reasonably satisfied that politicians are not breaking any laws; that the people who hold public office, who hold that kind of trust, are not taking advantage of that position for their own personal profit. That is the purpose of the exercise. It is not to file pieces of paper. It is not to make the lawyers happy. It is not even to remove all the conflict of interest that one can think of. The purpose of the bill is to remove the public perception of that conflict. As we saw in our legislative hearings, those can be two different things. One can follow the letter of the law and yet retain, in the public's mind, the perception of a conflict of interest.

That is the sticky part: whether, in the process of taking this bill through committee, we can do a little reworking here to solve that dilemma is a good question; whether we have to take this bill, change it, perhaps not substantially, but change it somewhat, get it in operation for a while and then get that restored is a further question.

I want to conclude by saying this. I do not know how we resolve this final problem, but I do think it has to get resolved. The public perception of the political process is really quite askew. I do not understand how it got quite this way, but it did. I think it is part of our job to restore public trust in the political process. I see this bill as being a step in that direction; but I want to report, and I am sure it is no secret to the members here,

there is a real problem out there with the public's credulity about the political process. It seems now not to fall on a particular political party or even on a particular political person. It seems to fall on the process in general. That cannot be allowed to continue. We must find ways of reversing that process. The public's trust in the political process is slipping badly.

I do not mind when people criticize Brian Mulroney, I do that myself on occasion, but I think it is particularly dangerous when the people in Canada have a public perception of the job of Prime Minister that is less than honourable. I believe we are pretty close to that mark. I believe it is particularly dangerous when the public perception of the Premier of Ontario or members of the cabinet or members of the assembly is that they are less than honourable, that there is a problem with conflicts of interest or that there is some difficulty in the way they are proceeding to carry on the business of Ontario.

Maybe it is an oversimplification to say that people are telling too many jokes about all politicians being crooks, but whatever message is being spread among the public, that message is starting to stick. That is a particularly dangerous one, because I think that when the public loses faith in its own political process, we have a problem of major proportions. This bill is an attempt to begin to rectify that situation. If this bill were in place, would the allegations of conflict that were put in this chamber last year still happen? They might, but the process would have a bit of a defence mechanism to deal with it. That is, I think, about as good as we are going to get with this.

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I do not think we will ever stop opposition members from popping up and saying some minister of the crown is doing something wrong. I hope not: that is what the parliamentary process is all about, that give and take between the opposition challenging what a government is doing and the government challenging whether the opposition is right, wrong, whacko or whatever on that given day.

I do not think it is bad to have that. The parliamentary system, warts and all, has survived for a long, long period of time and by and large has served the people well. What is wrong is when it gets personalized, when you start alleging that people are doing things of an almost criminal nature and getting away with it because they hold public office. That is wrong, unless you can make that stick or unless you have a process that can deal with that kind of allegation.

I support this legislation, however flawed it might be, because it attempts to do that; it attempts to put in place a process to handle that. It attempts, I suppose, to remind the members of the assembly that they do have a public trust here—in different capacities, depending on whether one is in the cabinet or an ordinary member of the assembly—but they have got it, whether they like it or not, and they have to deal with that.

My fear, which I think we will have to deal with as we go through this process as well, is that we may wind up having each member of the assembly fill out a whole lot of pieces of paper. It may be a real aggravation to each member here, and more important, to members of our families. I am afraid that one of the things in this bill is a little bit of the old-fashioned notion that a member of the assembly will be, first of all, a male out of the business jurisdiction. That is not true any more. The other notion is that sons and daughters will be little kiddies and will not be involved in other things. This is not true either.

I am concerned somewhat that the mechanics of this bill may be awkward for people. I do not want to do things that will be both awkward and useless at the same time. Frankly, that has been my observation of what some American jurisdictions have done. They have made people file a whole lot of papers. They have made that all public knowledge. One way or another, whether you want it to or not, I believe that once you start this kind of process it gets to be public. You may not intend that to happen, you may intend a lot of confidentiality and it may start out that way, but sooner or later it gets public.

I do not think we want to stop women from being involved in the political process. I do not think we want to make it impossible for a woman to be a member of our cabinet and her husband still to be able to carry on business. I want to remind members that is not far off the allegations that were put in this chamber just last year. I do not think that should be the purpose of the exercise. I would be really saddened if that is what happens in the long run.

I do not think we want to stop bright young people from coming in here if their parents are going to stand around and say, "Listen, if your running for public means I have to put in a public form all of my financial transactions, I do not want to do that." That would prevent that young person from holding public office. I think that would be wrong.

There are a lot of pitfalls on this road and we should try to determine just exactly where they

are. The important part of that process is simply to establish your own priorities. What are we trying to do here? I do not think we are trying to make life miserable for a whole lot of people. I hope that is not the point of the exercise. I do not think we are trying to make the lawyers wealthy by filling out legal forms. I do not think that is worth doing.

My hope is that this bill will do something as simple as to make the members of the assembly aware that they have the public trust in their hands and that they should be aware of where these conflicts of interest might arise; if the filling out of a form makes them more aware of that it is a good thing, that is fine.

We should try in this bill to get the public feeling that if somebody does something wrong, he has done more than just broken a whim of the Premier, a guideline set by the cabinet office or the Premier's office. If somebody has done something wrong, he should be breaking a law just like a person driving home tonight, if he exceeds the speed limit, has not broken a guideline he has broken a law. We put out police officers to remind them of that, and we have a judicial system which deals with them.

In that sense, the bill is supportable. It is certainly supportable on principle on second reading, and we will be happy to support it on that. I am trying to point out to the members that the bill may be a little too legalistic in many senses; it may have lost its basic sense of purpose. I hope that is not the case. As we go through it, as we do clause-by-clause on this bill, I want to explore some of those areas.

I think you have to start by saying that it deals with all members on an equal footing; that it deals with all aspects of lobbyists, even if it is only registering in that case; and that it resolves a problem. If it results in pieces of paper being filed on time, it will have served no useful purpose, in my view. If it results in people feeling there is at least a guideline there that is a law, there is a process there that is known or there is a means by which you can sort out the allegations of conflict of interest, then it will have served a useful purpose.

Mr. Warner: I have both a comment and a question. First, it was an excellent speech. I appreciate it.

Members may want to know why we should be trying to raise the public profile and the perception of the public about what we do. I received a letter recently from a constituent who raises three issues—the Workers' Compensation

Board, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and pay equity—and then says:

"In these days, the financial support of various functions, such as political parties, is a major consideration of conducting business. As such, serious consideration must be given as to where to invest these business dollars. Like any business decision, my financial support to any organization and/or individual is based on many factors. One of the factors will be where you stand on the concerns I have addressed herein."

If we want to demonstrate how far we have to go in trying to re-establish the trust of the public, that we are beyond being bought, that our vote is not going to be bought and that we are straightforward and honest, that certainly proves the point.

My question to the member for Oshawa is whether he can explain in a little bit of detail why it is important that this legislation apply to all members and not just the cabinet.

Ms. Fish: I have a question for the member for Oshawa. In dealing with the issue of whether a member of the Legislative Assembly should work outside of the assembly while holding a seat, the member made particular reference to the illustration of lawyers, suggesting that perhaps it would be inappropriate for members of the Legislative Assembly who were lawyers to be part of an active practice. I think the member's exact words were "working for a law firm" at the time of holding a seat.

I wonder whether the member, in his mind, feels there are any other business interests, occupations, vocations, activities or professions that would be complementary with holding a seat in the assembly or whether he feels there are none. In particular, we can point to those who may come to us as members, not in a salaried circumstance; not as partners in a firm of professionals where they might be able to maintain a position in the firm but not be active and not draw down.

I am always put in mind of the illustration of the family grocery, for instance, a small farm and that sort of thing. I wonder if the member would be good enough to comment on some of those issues as well.

Mr. Speaker: The member has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr. Breagh: In detail.

To answer the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) first, I think we are all equals and that means the same rules apply to each and every member in here or there are no rules that make any sense to me. It may seem a

little more stringent, and the illustrations are obvious. A member of the cabinet makes more direct decisions about government contracts than I do, but I think the rules have to apply to every member; there is no way to get around that.

1730

The member asked whether you could hold an outside job. Sure, there probably are such members. In other jurisdictions, people do that. If I were a member at Westminster in Britain, I would probably remain a teacher. People would know that they do not pay the members very much there. I have a family to feed and a mortgage to pay. I teach all day and at night I go in and vote once in a while. I am not expected to be there every day. There are 50 or 60 members out of 625 members who attend regularly and they kind of conduct the business. That is their tradition. I do not think that is our tradition at all.

We could find examples of where you could probably retain an interest if you were an artist or a writer or something like that. You could do that. If you have a basic outside source of income that draws you there first, that is where the problem occurs. If I am a writer, surely I could write at night. But if my purpose in life is writing a book, I should go and do that and I should not pretend that I am member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario first.

We could probably devise a system which would accommodate both, but I caution members that there are dangers once we start to do that. I would be happy to take no salary if you would allow me to charge one per cent of bills that I vote on. If you would allow me to work as a registered lobbyist for nine major multinational firms, I am sure they would be happy to buy my vote. In other jurisdictions, this is done. I am just saying it is not appropriate here.

Ms. Fish: I am pleased to join in this debate on second reading of Bill 23 and have a variety of things that I would like to share with the Speaker and the members of this assembly in dealing with this discussion on the principle of the bill.

Perhaps I will begin by posing a question of why we would need such a piece of legislation. I think it is instructive to reflect on how such matters have been dealt with in the past. We know that in dealing with conflict of interest in the case of members of the executive council, members of cabinet, those standards have traditionally been established by guidelines and they have been traditionally established, overseen and enforced by the Premiers of this province.

We have seen, in the last two years in particular, two things. One is a very dramatic change in the guidelines that would govern the conduct of the members of the executive council, that change to substantially weaken the provisions and standard of conduct to be met by members of the executive council in putting their personal financial interests, affairs and benefits into a secondary position behind the discharge of their duties within the public domain and the public trust that attaches to that.

Second, we have seen a surprising unwillingness on the part of this Premier to enforce even those weakened guidelines. We have had two resignations from cabinet that have occurred after extensive and repeated raising of charges of conflict of interest and improper action by members of this assembly and not expeditious, rapid movement on the part of the Premier to enforce his own guidelines and a high standard of ethical conduct with regard to conflict of interest on the actions of the members of his cabinet, his executive council.

We have also seen an extensive series of reviews, reports and examinations that have come forward in a bewildering array, apart from the two entirely separate committees that dealt with the activity and the conduct of two former ministers of the crown, the member for Oriole and the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine).

We also saw the repeated response of the Premier to concerns raised about weaknesses in his guidelines for conflicts of interest as being a shoving away of the issue, an unwillingness to deal with it directly, but rather to have a variety of individuals, all of whom were outside of this chamber, outside of the legislative arena, dealing with a variety of reviews of conflict of interest, conflict-of-interest guidelines and questions of conformity with the guidelines, or lack thereof, by members of his cabinet.

Indeed, it is worthy of mention that, even within the very watered-down guidelines that he himself introduced as a major change, with, I might say, much fanfare, much public statement and press coverage, there were some 14 ministers, including the Premier himself, who were in violation of those guidelines, as established by one of the several reviews that were undertaken of conformity with the guidelines by members of the cabinet.

I think it is worth reflecting that those are 14 members, exclusive of the member for Oriole and the member for Cochrane North, who were specifically not included in the review. They

include such worthies as the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), the Minister of Housing, the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton), the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), the Minister of Natural Resources, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes), the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter), the Treasurer, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), the Premier himself, the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell), the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Ruprecht), the Attorney General and the Minister of Skills Development and Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara), a troubling list of a clear majority of the cabinet who were themselves in noncompliance with the Premier's own much watered-down conflict-of-interest guidelines as he established them.

Within that list, there were varying degrees of noncompliance, as indicated by the report and the review. Several, however, were in rather extensive noncompliance, with multiple companies, corporate interests, investments and holdings not being included within the statements and corrections not being made, even within the required filings of these much watered-down conflict-of-interest guidelines that this Premier introduced.

So part of the reason we have a piece of legislation before us today has been the woeful failure of the guidelines established by this Premier to govern the actions and conduct of his cabinet members, members of his executive council, and the woeful failure of this Premier to enforce those guidelines and to live up to the promise he so grandly made in introducing them, that all the members of his executive council, of his cabinet, would be brought firmly to heel, that all the i's would be dotted and all the t's crossed, to ensure that none were in any way out of compliance with those much watered-down conflict-of-interest guidelines.

Yet we find some 14 were not in compliance, including the Premier himself, and no steps whatsoever were taken to deal with those in any way—a very sorry state of affairs, made sorriest, I think, by the fact that one of the key elements of this legislation, extremely troubling to me and some members on this side of the House, is that it would appear to remove a key responsibility from the shoulders of the Premier of this province, whoever he or she may be, now or in the future, namely, the responsibility of determining who should be serving in cabinet and the

responsibility of ensuring that those who do serve in cabinet, the executive council of this province, are indeed in total conformity with any conflict-of-interest guidelines or legislation and have in every respect placed the public trust above any personal holdings, investments or a gain that might otherwise accrue to a member by virtue of not complying with the conflict-of-interest guidelines or the legislation.

1740

I think that is a sorry Americanization of a process here. Perhaps a common fault that has occurred over the years historically in Canada, not simply here in Ontario, has been to look with some longing at the approaches that have sometimes occurred in other jurisdictions, and particularly often when we find that perfectly good structures and procedures have suffered because of terribly imperfect individuals who have held office within them. We have sought instead to change the structure, to say that the problem has been the process or structure, and not to place the blame where the blame is properly placed, at the feet of the persons who have failed to follow the procedures, who have failed in the trust given them to discharge their responsibilities within the structures we have.

I think the move that appears within this legislation—it will perhaps be examined more carefully through a proper clause-by-clause review—the direction that appears to be here is to replace the clear responsibility of the Premier of this province, which is to set the highest ethical standard for his or her own conduct and in turn to ensure the highest ethical standard on behalf of his or her members of cabinet, with the judgement of a separately appointed, separately located commissioner.

I think that is an extremely unfortunate step to take. It is not so much that it would be inappropriate to have a commissioner with whom filings might be made and not so much that it might be inappropriate to have an office where questions might be raised on the part of members of the cabinet when considering what does or does not come under guidelines or legislation or regulations that might implement it, but rather it is that there appears to be a replacement of the judgement that properly rests with the first minister of the government of this province, placing it instead in the hands of an appointed official.

I think that removes even further from the hands of the electorate an opportunity to judge the conduct of those of us who are in this chamber, those of us who sit on the Treasury

benches and occupy the seats of the executive council, the cabinet, the cabinet ministers. That is unfortunate and unnecessary and has been brought forward principally because of the abject failure of this Premier to introduce firm guidelines rather than the dreadfully watered down conflict-of-interest guidelines that were introduced, and because of the abject failure to ensure that even those minimal standards were met in their completeness and totality by the members of his cabinet, or those members would no longer serve in cabinet.

I am troubled as well, however, by a couple of other elements in the legislation. Let me speak in no particular order to a couple of things I think come through.

First is the issue of whether it is appropriate to draw a distinction between what cabinet ministers must be required to meet by way of conduct or compliance and what is required of private members of the Legislative Assembly. Unlike the member for Oshawa, I am of the view that there is a very distinct difference in the burden that appropriately rests on the shoulders of cabinet ministers and of private members of this Legislature. I draw the distinction for a reason of some considerable substance. I draw it because, within the parliamentary form we have, members of cabinet have access to confidential information that members of the assembly do not have access to.

Members of the cabinet have the responsibility for drafting and putting into place laws of this province that members of the Legislative Assembly may never have the opportunity to debate. I am speaking, of course, of the process of establishing the regulations that are the companion implementation of virtually every piece of legislation we have. Those regulations very often provide exemptions that have not been detailed in the legislation that is debated upon and voted within this chamber. They also very often put additional requirements that have similarly not been specified, not been debated or not been specifically decided within this assembly. That power, and power it is, rests squarely and solely with the executive council, the cabinet of the government of Ontario.

Second, within the structure of laws that we have, within the structure of statutes that we have, discretionary power is vested directly with the ministers, discretionary power to override the legislation, to change a requirement, discretionary power very often not simply to award a contract but to lay a charge, to withdraw a charge, to direct that an investigation occur, to

suppress an investigation, to do a variety of things that have a very much more direct effect on the interests of the members of the public of this province, the personal interests of members of this assembly, the personal interests of members of the cabinet. Yet those decisions are not the subject of a vote within this assembly. They are not the subject of a review that would have the effect of altering the decision under our present system of law.

Those two areas, fundamental to the system we have and fundamental to the structure of government we have, cannot be altered without a fundamental change in our structure of government, without going to the very heart of whether we should even have a cabinet and ministers.

I happen to be one of those who feels that we should have a cabinet and ministers of the crown, that we must within our legislation provide for areas of discretion and that we properly have within our implementation of legislation regulations adopted by the cabinet and not by the Legislature. They are areas that, when coupled with the confidential information that flows to members of the cabinet and not to members of the Legislative Assembly, taken together form a very powerful and compelling reason to establish a very different standard that is required in disclosure, in disposal of assets and in limitation of the conduct of those members. That is precisely because there is a much greater power that is given to members of the cabinet to exercise decisions and to exercise authority within the public arena. With that power comes a much greater responsibility to exercise that authority properly within the public trust.

I believe it is appropriate to draw a distinction between private members of the assembly and those on the Treasury benches who are members of the cabinet. That does not in any way, however, suggest there ought not similarly to be requirements that must be met by private members of the assembly. I believe there properly should be. I think, however, that in one area in particular, and perhaps more, we have not given adequate thought to the changes that have occurred in our society over the last few generations.

1750

Let me deal at the outset with the question of exterior work. That subject was touched on just a few minutes ago by the member for Oshawa and, indeed, I questioned him a little bit on that.

I am of the view, as the member for Oshawa has indicated, that the definition of what is proper exterior work and what is not is a very difficult

definition indeed, that the line to be drawn is a careful line to be drawn and one even more careful to be walked. But I am troubled at the suggestion that no exterior work is possible.

I am similarly troubled at the suggestion—or perhaps it is not a suggestion; perhaps it is simply what I inferred from the member's response to my question—that any exterior work would be viewed by the member as having a priority over his or her responsibilities to the people in this Legislative Assembly.

I am of the view that there is quite a variety of activities, occupations and vocations that would be very well subject to a part-time involvement, that might be very well subject to an evening involvement and that might be very well subject to their proper place for exterior work; that is, in a secondary or tertiary position to the primary responsibilities to the people of this province here in this Legislative Assembly. I would be loath to feel that we ought to require that there not be any continued pursuit of a person's work, of a person's vocation.

I give you the example, for instance, of someone who might be teaching. Would we really want to suggest that it would be totally inappropriate for someone to continue on a part-time basis providing some occasional evening instruction, perhaps to students of special needs, perhaps within the parameters of an adult learning centre, perhaps, for example, within the framework of a community group where there is, indeed, even a modest remuneration that might attach to the instruction that is done or perhaps to someone who might be a part-time lecturer at a university?

I am not at all persuaded that we should be telling the people of this province that anyone who wishes to continue that sort of work, to continue his occupation in a secondary way, in a part-time way, in a way that clearly puts the priority behind the priorities of work here in this assembly, ought not to be able to do so.

I agree that finding the definition is tough, and I am not sure I have it. I am certainly not standing in my place today to offer that definition to the Speaker or the members of this assembly. But I feel very uncomfortable indeed at a suggestion that, because a definition is difficult, we ought simply to say nothing should be done, save work in the assembly.

I would prefer to see us, in the course of careful examination, find the ways to encourage people who, for a variety of reasons—not the least might be the rather unique job interview that all of us in this assembly must go through from time

to time to retain our jobs here—might wish to keep their hands in, as it were, in another area of work, but who would be prepared to do so, whether as writers, teachers or a number of other occupations, on a part-time basis in a secondary position to the principal responsibility here.

I think it is extremely important that we not close that door of opportunity for the members. It is not only because I think we would be closing the door of this assembly to people who would want to remain active in some of these other areas; it is also because I think this assembly could benefit from a greater degree of representativeness and a greater degree of sensitivity that would flow from its members being up to date and aware in a hands-on way of some of the things that are occurring outside these august halls in a variety of fields.

We think, for example, of the benefits of having within our halls people who are practising farmers when we discuss issues of agricultural policy. Surely, if there is a desirability in having people who are practising farmers in this assembly when we discuss agricultural policy, there is a benefit in having someone who might be a writer discussing issues of cultural policy, for example, or a teacher discussing education.

These are the things I think can be the positive benefits if properly defined and if properly placed in terms of their secondary position of priority, can be positive benefits to the debate, to the ultimate legislation that we adopt and, in the final analysis, to the shape we give this province for the people of this province when we examine the legislation, when we examine programs, when we examine expenditure priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I will be going on for some time. Would it be your wish that I continue for another four minutes, or would you wish me to adjourn the debate at this time?

Mr. Speaker: That is up the House.

Ms. Fish: Shall I continue then?

Mr. Speaker: I am just wondering. There might be an announcement of what the business would be.

Ms. Fish: That was my thought, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The member may, then, offer an adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Ms. Fish, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Elston: I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

We will consider legislation each afternoon next week. The specific bills to dealt with, including a bill to be introduced early next week and perhaps discussed in the caucuses dealing with an amendment to the Mental Health Act, are the following:

For second reading, Bill 23, conflict of interest, if not completed today, which I guess means it is not; Bill 7, regional municipalities; Bill 25, the wine content act; Bill 62, retail sales tax; Bill 63, income tax;

Committee of the whole House on Bill 34, freedom of information; third reading of Bill

154, pay equity; second reading of Bill 56, auto insurance, and committee of the whole House on Bill 170, pensions.

On Thursday morning, we will deal with private members' business standing in the names of the member for Cornwall (Mr. Guindon) and the member for Northumberland (Mr. Sheppard).

The order in which these matters are considered may be revised following consultation among the real House leaders.

The House adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

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No. 19

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, June 1, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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Alphabetical lists of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees also appear at the back as an appendix.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, June 1, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming the second spring group of legislative pages to serve in the third session of the 33rd Parliament, 1987:

Jody Applebaum, Wilson Heights; Charmaine Appleton, Mississauga North; Shelley Ayres, Brantford; Olu Clarke, Yorkview; Lorna Coulter, Durham-York; Joanne Davison, Oshawa; Michael Drouillard, Windsor-Sandwich; Natasha Dubrovin, Lake Nipigon; Christopher Harte, Kitchener; Jennifer Hughes, Grey-Bruce; Christopher Johnston, Kenora; Evangelos Karagounis, Scarborough-Ellesmere; Tricia Knebel, Brock; Rebecca Melville, Port Arthur; Ahmad Muinuddin, York Mills; Vuthary Phy, Burlington South; Andrew Resmer, Hastings-Peterborough; Jennifer Roberts, Grey; Rebecca Schinkel, Wentworth North; Donald Shackell, Dufferin-Simcoe; Greg Smith, Middlesex; Bryan Timm, Renfrew South; Bryan Tokarsky, Wellington-Dufferin-Peel; and Jeffrey Wallace, Sudbury East.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Gillies: I rise on the occasion of the beginning of Canadian Environment Week.

More than ever before, Canadians and Ontarians are aware of the dangers pollution brings to our air, our waters and our lands. A Gallup poll published just today showed that in two short years the number of Canadians considering the dangers of pollution as very serious has increased by 30 per cent. Fully two thirds of our country's population now feels pollution is a significant threat to the quality of our environment and virtually all Canadians, 96 per cent, have heard or read about the dangers of pollution.

Despite this increased awareness, we still have a lot to do by way of cleaning up and protecting the environment for the future. Here in Ontario, we know a safe environment is a high priority. Acid rain, toxic chemicals and leaking landfills have taken their toll.

This Canadian Environment Week gives us an opportunity to focus our attention on environmental issues and to heighten the awareness of the public and industry that a clean environment is also good economics.

This year, I hope the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) will take this week seriously enough to participate in some of the activities. Last year, the minister's excuse for nonparticipation was that he felt every week was Environment Week in Ontario. That is a lame excuse for not taking every opportunity possible to get the message out to keep Ontario clean.

INJURED WORKERS DAY

Mr. McClellan: Today, I am doing something a little different with members' statements. Today is June 1, which in Ontario is traditionally the day we set aside to remember workers who have been killed or injured on the job. I would like to ask my colleagues in the Legislature to join with me in a moment of silence in memory of those who were killed on the job in Ontario during the past 12 months.

The House observed one minute's silence.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Mr. Reycraft: I want to report to the assembly this afternoon on an enormously successful telethon conducted at the Children's Hospital of Southwestern Ontario last weekend.

This is the second year in which the London hospital has participated in this international telethon. Last year, a total of \$391,488 was pledged in the telethon. When this year's telethon concluded at 6 p.m. yesterday afternoon, the tote board showed a grand total of \$545,000. This money will all be used to fund additional research, equipment and special programs at the London children's hospital so that the hospital may expand the excellent health care services the staff there already provides.

I want to applaud the people of southwestern Ontario who responded so generously on Saturday and Sunday. I also want to congratulate the hospital's development officer, Dawn Snow, and the over 1,200 volunteers, some of whom worked through the full 24 hours of the telethon.

Together, they have made a very significant contribution to the quality of life in southwestern Ontario.

I want to draw particular attention to the efforts of television broadcasters Jim Swan of CFPL-TV in London and Brian Elmslie of CKNX-TV in Wingham. Not only did they donate their professional talents for the duration of the telethon, but as well they surrendered Brian's beard and Jim's moustache as part of a challenge that was met by their viewers.

CONVERSION OF RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. McFadden: I would like to raise a serious matter concerning the loss of a significant number of affordable rental apartment units in Metro Toronto as a result of the growing number of conversions to what appear to be apartment-hotel units.

Hundreds of rental units in Metro Toronto now are being taken off the rental housing market to be used for short-term residences for out-of-town visitors in apparent contravention of both provincial and municipal law. My office has received numerous complaints from tenants that this type of illegal apartment-hotel accommodation exists in at least three north Toronto apartment buildings.

It would appear that there is an orchestrated effort on the part of the building owner to obtain vacant possession of as many rental units as possible by refusing tenants the right to sublet their units. My office has spoken with officials of the Ministry of Housing concerning this problem and has provided them with specific information regarding the location of alleged illegal apartment-hotel units.

To the best of my knowledge, there is yet to be any action taken by the ministry with regard to these illegal apartment-hotel units. Given the serious nature of this problem, I call on the Ministry of Housing to get on with the job and investigate thoroughly these allegations of illegal apartment-hotel units in Metropolitan Toronto so that this problem can be dealt with and eradicated.

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RIDING OF LAKE NIPIGON

Mr. Pouliot: I would like to draw the attention of the House to where there is nothing short of a tragedy in the largest riding in our province, my own riding of Lake Nipigon. Statistics will attest—and they were given to the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon)—that as we near the year 2000, not eight,

not nine, but a full 11 per cent of the people in the riding of Lake Nipigon do not have washroom facilities.

The average family income in our riding is \$27,000, compared to \$48,000 for Markham, where 80 per cent of the people have more than one washroom. In Lake Nipigon, 11 per cent of the people do not have any. We are spending \$30 million of taxpayers' money in this province to make sure the Gucci crowd, the more fortunate people, do not get rained on when they go to see the Blue Jays.

I am asking the House, where are the priorities as we near the year 2000 that the essential facilities for our first Canadians are omitted? Every time I have asked this House, through the Treasurer or the Premier (Mr. Peterson), we are told to go and see the feds. What needs to be done is for the government to put some money aside in terms of an essential service. After all, we have just looked at \$30 billion in terms of overall expenditure.

INJURED WORKERS DAY

Mr. Gordon: Today we honour the injured workers of this province. We recognize their pain and suffering as human beings. We recognize their contribution and that of their families; and we also must reflect upon the fact that it is the families that often suffer along with the worker, because when the worker receives an injury that takes away his livelihood it also takes away much of the peace and quiet that we find in normal family life.

At the prevention end, the occupational health and safety laws have failed this worker. After the injury, the Workers' Compensation Board more often than not fails this worker. Rather than facilitate rehabilitation and compensation, the WCB often frustrates it.

The workers' compensation system in this province as it stands now does not serve the interests of the workers, rather it too often serves to demoralize the workers, to deprive the workers of what is fair. What symbolizes this more than any other aspect of that dehumanized sprawling bureaucracy is the meat chart. This chart coldly determines the compensation based on the part of the body which is injured. This chart arbitrarily sets the worth of the loss of a limb, faculty or ability without concern for how this loss affects present or future earning ability.

I call on this House to recognize the injured workers and to move expeditiously to try to do everything possible legislatively to help them.

MINING ACCIDENTS

Mr. Martel: We have just suffered two more fatalities in the mining industry, bringing the figure to 10 this year. There is something drastically wrong. We are ending unemployment in the north with people being killed. There is something drastically wrong. If this were policemen being killed, this province would be torn apart with unrest, but dumb miners seem to be the scapegoats. No one really gets uptight when they get killed and I, for one, am tired of counting the bodies.

In the minister's statement last week, he did not talk about scaling. He did not talk about a number of other types of fatalities which occurred. In drilling, there is no protection; lighting is inadequate; and we get this kind of weak, Caspar Milquetoast approach. The workers did not want that. That is all industry was prepared to give and that is all the minister was prepared to allow workers to have. When are we going to say to the industry, "You are going to clean up and we are going to put those provisions in place which make it safe." If it costs a few bucks, so what? This year, 10 miners. The price is too high for the present system.

I say to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), since his Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) will not do something, will he?

VISITOR

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join with me in recognizing and welcoming in the Speaker's gallery the Clerk of Parliament for Grenada, Curt Strachan.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

PROTECTION OF CAROLINIAN ZONE

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: My colleague the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) and I would like to inform the members of a memorandum of understanding that will be signed between our respective ministries today. It will deal with the protection of native plants, animals and natural habitats of an area in southern Ontario known as Carolinian Canada.

The memorandum commits a total of \$1.8 million in government funding over three years to the protection of this valuable and distinctive natural heritage. This funding will match commitments made by the private sector. It will be administered by the Ontario Heritage Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, in a special Carolinian fund.

I want to commend the three nongovernment agencies that are contributing financially to this program. Those agencies are Wildlife Habitat Canada, the Nature Conservancy to Canada and the World Wildlife Fund, Canada. Key members from those three agencies will be witness to the signing of the memorandum of understanding, which will be undertaken today. In particular, the World Wildlife Fund is to be commended for its lead role in stimulating this very important co-operative initiative.

As members may know, the Carolinian zone in southern Ontario boasts vegetation and wildlife that is not found anywhere else in the province—or in Canada, in some cases. This includes sassafras, tulip and red mulberry trees, opossum, blue racers and the Carolina wren, to mention just a very few.

In the case of Carolinian Canada, we have assisted in developing an overall conservation strategy for the region and are working to protect 36 critical natural areas. These areas include southern deciduous forests, wetlands, prairies and savannahs. Among them are 26 areas of natural and scientific interest designated by my ministry and eight of Ontario's most significant wetlands.

The land protection program set out in this memorandum of understanding involves both private stewardship and land acquisition.

Under the private stewardship component, we are encouraging land owners in Carolinian areas to leave undeveloped tracts to preserve Carolinian lifeforms. Co-operating land owners are eligible to receive recognition through the Ontario Heritage Foundation stewardship awards program. They can also get management advice and apply for stewardship assistance from member agencies of the Natural Heritage League.

Actual land acquisition from willing land owners is reserved only for the most significant properties when no other options for protection are available.

Under this program, the province is working with public interest groups and the private sector to ensure that the natural diversity offered to us in Carolinian Canada remains with us for generations to come.

My colleague the Minister of Citizenship and Culture and I believe this is a very significant and positive program and we are pleased to be participating in it.

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Hon. Mr. Bradley: This is the beginning of Canadian Environment Week. It is an appropri-

ate time to reiterate to this House and to the people of Ontario the Peterson government's commitment to our environment.

We on this side understand that we must protect our renewable resources, our drinking water supplies, indeed the entire fragile ecosystem which supports the web of life, if we are to endow our children with a full and prosperous future.

It is a huge job, following decades of abuse and neglect, to restore the wholesomeness of what nature gave us. In our two years as stewards of the environment, we have worked hard to turn the province from the careless course it was following. Within days of taking office, our government removed the spills bill from the legislative freezer and proclaimed it into law.

Mr. Gillies: The farmers love it.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) was supposed to applaud there.

The result has been that potential spillers are taking greater care and prompt cleanup has become the rule.

We have instituted Countdown Acid Rain, the most progressive acid rain abatement program in North America or Europe. It requires the four big acid rain polluters to cut their emissions by two thirds by 1994. We have also aggressively pressed our American neighbours to take the kind of similar action that is needed to protect waterways, wildlife, forests, historical buildings and human health in Ontario and throughout eastern North America.

1350

The Peterson government's municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program is the most effective tool in Ontario history for cleaning up the province's waterways. The old system was full of holes. It was based on the foolish assumption that dilution was the solution to pollution and it was buttressed, if that is the word, by a lattice of unenforceable guidelines.

MISA will cap the chemical loadings of every major discharger into our waterways at levels that can be attained by the best available technology economically achievable. Furthermore, these levels will be periodically reviewed and where technological improvements permit they will be lowered. The ultimate goal of the MISA program is the virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances from discharges into our waterways.

On one of our most seriously polluted waterways, the Niagara River, our government held out for a meaningful cleanup agreement between the four governments involved. Due to our

intransigent advocacy of the environment, a substantial first step in the cleanup of that long-abused river was agreed to. The plan now has a percentage pollution reduction, a timetable and a meaningful reference to excavation of the toxic chemical dumps that line the United States shore.

Our government is also dedicated to making recycling work. In the past, the commitment to recycling in Ontario was halfhearted and underfunded. Our government is determined to boost recycling from a novelty that pops up here and there for a few years to a permanent province-wide activity that touches the day-to-day lives of most of our citizens.

The Peterson government quintupled municipal curbside recycling grants last year. We will have even more money than that available this year for recycling.

The first step in making recycling an important environmental initiative was the pop can regulation we passed within three months of taking office. That action ended years of puerile dawdling. The regulation required the soft drink industry to take responsibility for the fate of its containers. After studying its obligations, the industry announced a \$20-million program to aid municipalities with the capital costs of establishing multimaterial curbside recycling programs.

That sum from private industry is on top of our financial commitment. Right now, province-wide recycling programs divert about two per cent of municipal garbage destined for landfill sites. What a lost opportunity that statistic represents. My aim is to expand recycling so that at least 15 per cent of Ontario's household garbage is diverted from landfills.

To back our tough approach to environmental protection, we have increased fines for pollution 10-fold, added provision for jail sentences and made corporate executives and directors legally responsible by giving them a duty to take care.

Furthermore, we are enforcing our environmental laws with vigour. In the fiscal year ended March 31, prosecutions more than tripled from two years previous, while convictions doubled over the same period. Those who previously felt themselves immune from environmental legislation have found that they are not above the law.

All this is not to say we have solved all of the problems; far from it. We still have several important initiatives to introduce. Tough, efficient follow-through as well as continued vigilance is necessary.

Among our future initiatives will be an infrastructure renewal program, aid to municipi-

palities for sewer and waterworks and a comprehensive waste management plan. In addition, we hope to introduce a much-improved air pollution abatement program. We are pressing for a national superfund to clean up old problem spots as they are discovered.

In conclusion, I would like to give our pledge that environmental restoration and protection will continue to be a top priority for the Peterson government in years to come.

MINING ACCIDENT

Hon. Mr. Scott: On April 14, four miners died at the Levack mine when several tons of ore fell down a shaft in which they were working. On May 6, the Sudbury Regional Police, in an information sworn before a justice of the peace, charged a fellow miner with four counts of criminal negligence causing death.

The leader of the third party, the member for York South (Mr. Rae), asked me if I would review this matter and consider exercising my power as Attorney General to stay the criminal proceedings so that an inquest could be held and all of the circumstances surrounding the deaths be made public. The member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) asked me to consider withdrawing the criminal information.

My staff and I have conducted a full review of the circumstances of the case during the past two weeks, and so I am now in a position to respond.

Under the criminal justice system, the police are responsible for investigating events such as the deaths of these miners and for determining whether charges under the Criminal Code of Canada should be laid. That is the procedure that was followed in this case. The Sudbury Regional Police, following an investigation into the matter, concluded there were reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a criminal offence had been committed. They swore to that belief before a justice of the peace, who concluded that the test of reasonable and probable grounds had been met.

As Attorney General, my responsibility under the Criminal Code is to determine whether it is appropriate to continue criminal proceedings that have been commenced by this process. Normally, where charges have been properly laid, the matter should proceed and be determined by a judge sitting in court. The legal authorities emphasize that the Attorney General should exercise his discretion to stay or withdraw charges only when there is some clear and convincing legal reason or some compelling circumstances relating to the charges to support

the decision to withdraw or stay. This is implicit in the very idea of the rule of law.

We will want to remember that criminal responsibility is a matter to be finally determined by the courts, not by the police or by the crown. A charge has been properly laid; the accused under our system is presumed innocent. Thus, both the accused and the public have an interest in seeing that the matter comes before a court of law, where the issue can be dealt with in a public judicial forum with finality and free of partisan or extraneous considerations.

After giving the most anxious and deliberate consideration to this matter, and keeping in mind the important interest in the administration of justice which I have outlined, I have concluded that I should not intervene to stay or withdraw these charges. These charges were laid in the sworn belief of a police officer, supported by the legal advice of the crown attorney of the district of Sudbury, that there were reasonable and probable grounds to believe that an offence had been committed. This sworn information was laid before a justice of the peace, who concluded that the legal test for issuing process had been met. After a careful review, I do not believe I can conclude that the legal test for the laying of an information was not met; nor are there any clear or compelling circumstances respecting the charges themselves which would support a decision to stay or withdraw them.

That would normally be the end of the matter, but a second question is raised. It is said that the laying of these criminal charges has the effect of delaying a coroner's inquest into the event or that the coroner's inquest should be allowed to proceed now, as the criminal charges proceed.

It has long been the practice in this province that where criminal charges have been laid in connection with a death, no inquest is held until those criminal charges have been disposed of.

As both the McRuer Royal Commission Inquiry into Civil Rights and the Ontario Law Reform Commission have observed, there are important reasons of principle supporting this practice. These reasons relate to the different purposes served by a criminal trial on the one hand and an inquest on the other. The proper forum for determining criminal responsibility is a court of law; there alone are found important safeguards for the accused, especially his right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The purpose of an inquest is quite different. The focus of the inquest is to provide the public with information on how, when, where and by

what means a deceased individual met his or her death. But the inquest is not designed to serve as a substitute for a criminal trial. Indeed, the Coroners Act specifically provides that an inquest jury shall not make any finding of legal responsibility with respect to a death. Such determinations are the sole responsibility of our criminal and civil courts of law.

If an inquest were allowed to proceed before criminal charges were disposed of, there would be a very real risk of prejudice to the accused. Although the inquest is not designed to determine criminal responsibility, it would inevitably produce considerable debate and speculation on precisely this issue. Given the public interest in the matter, it would be impossible to maintain the dividing line between matters appropriate to an inquest and those appropriate to a criminal trial.

1400

It is for this reason that the long-standing practice has been to dispose of any criminal charges prior to holding an inquest into a death in those rare cases where it is appropriate to invoke both procedures. This practice was confirmed recently in Ottawa, in the case of the death of a young woman who was working in a John Howard Society house when she was killed there by an inmate. The inmate was charged with first-degree murder in connection with the death. It was only after the conclusion of the criminal trial that an inquest was held into the young woman's death.

There is obviously an important public interest in obtaining a complete understanding of the tragic events which led to the deaths of these four miners, but in the circumstances this general public right must yield to the specific interest and right of the individual accused facing a criminal charge.

As well, to intervene in this case, when the police investigative process has taken place and judicial process has been issued by the justice of the peace, would undermine the public's interest in a fair and impartial system for the administration of justice. Citizens can have confidence in the justice system only when it is clear that the system is administered free of partisan or extraneous considerations, no matter how well motivated.

When criminal charges have been laid, it is fundamental that such allegations be determined as quickly as possible in a criminal trial where safeguards exist to protect the accused. I have instructed my officials to take every possible step to ensure that the criminal charges are dealt with expeditiously or as the accused may require.

Once the charges have been disposed of, there will be no impediment to an inquest being held. In due course, all the outstanding questions should and will be answered and we will not have interfered with—indeed, I hope we will have protected and advanced—the individual rights of the accused.

CROP INSURANCE

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The entrepreneurial spirit of the Ontario farmer is the foundation of this province's food production system.

In any sort of business venture there are risks, but as the honourable members are well aware, food production combines all the risks and uncertainties of any business with some that are unique to farming. The industry remains at the mercy of the weather, as we saw with the record-setting heavy rains of last fall.

As a way of minimizing these weather risks, Ontario helps make crop insurance available, in partnership with the federal government and the producers themselves.

Earlier this year, I established a committee to review the Canada-Ontario crop insurance program to determine whether changes or improvements were necessary or desirable to ensure maximum benefits to the largest number of farmers.

The committee examined federal and provincial legislation, looked at programs in other jurisdictions and held 15 public hearings across the province, receiving 275 submissions from farm groups and individuals.

I would like to express my ministry's gratitude to those commodity groups, farm organizations and individuals who put forward their views and recommendations in this review process.

I would also like to thank the chairman, Harry Pelissero, and the committee members for their hard work on behalf of Ontario's farm community.

The report of the Crop Insurance Review Committee made a number of recommendations. These included increasing overall coverage levels and the amount of financial support the province contributes, as well as adding new features such as spot loss coverage.

Today I am releasing copies of the report for public comment. These will also be sent to farm organizations and those who made submissions to the committee. The deadline for public comment will be July 31, 1987.

In days to come, we will be discussing these comments, and the committee's recommendations, with the federal Department of Agricul-

ture, the Ontario Crop Insurance Commission and specific farm commodity groups.

Some of the committee's recommendations must be considered in relation to federal legislation; others are within the mandate of the Ontario Crop Insurance Commission.

We want to ensure that any changes made in the Canada-Ontario crop insurance program are for the better and for the benefit of all the farmers in this province who depend on this valuable program; we want to have as many of these as possible in place for the 1988 planting season.

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to invite the members of the Legislature to join me in celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

On June 1, 1927, 16 stores were opened by the newly created LCBO. The first bottle was purchased at the outlet at the corner of Church and Lombard here in Toronto. Today, the people of Ontario are served by 615 stores which offer more than 3,300 products and generate more than \$1 billion worth of sales.

In another setting I would propose a toast, but here I will simply say, "Happy anniversary to the LCBO" and "Cheers."

RESPONSES

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Gordon: I would like to address my remarks to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott).

For five hours, water from a crusher runs into a holding bin at Levack mine—for five hours. The brattice is missing in the shaft. It has been reported in the past by skip tenders, people who take care of the skips in the mines. A relief valve is known to have been working improperly, and many other factors as well.

After the accident, the company goes in and finds 14 infractions of the law and fixes them before the Ministry of Labour inspectors go in. Then the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) issues four orders of his own. Then we find, of course, that Joseph Kuhle has been charged with criminal negligence.

I would not for one minute suggest that our police department in Sudbury is not an excellent police department that does its job and holds up its end of what it must do. At the same time, we have to ask, where is the company in all this? Where are workers in Ontario going to be in the future when they go in and sign a form that says they have inspected a piece of machinery, and a couple of hours later or a day later there is a bad

accident or someone is killed, due to no fault of that worker who checked that equipment? Where are workers in Ontario going to be in the future?

That is why so many workers in this province and in the Sudbury region are very upset and were ready to put down their tools the very day they heard Joseph Kuhle was charged with criminal negligence.

In the mining industry we have inquests. What do the widows do now? Where is their representation? They have to wait and not know how and why these things passed.

We in the Sudbury region believe there is more here than meets the eye, and we expected there would have been a different answer to the request that was made some weeks ago.

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Gillies: As I said earlier during members' statements, we certainly want to join with the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) in recognizing Canadian Environment Week, but some of the rather self-congratulatory language of the minister's statement, I think, bears some consideration by the House.

The municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program brought in by this government regulates the chemical effluent of some 300 industries that discharge directly into our province's waters. What the minister has yet to come to grips with is the question of the 13,000-plus industries in our province that discharge into the municipal sewer system.

The minister will know that an initiative is being taken by Pollution Probe to extend the MISA program to the consideration of these industries, which we believe pose just as great a threat to the cleanliness of our water supply as do those industries which are already covered by MISA. I would urge the minister to take that into consideration. Indeed, I will be proposing a resolution to the House to consider this, and I know the minister will want to urge his colleagues to support such a resolution.

Other reference is made in the minister's statement to the progress being made in the fight against acid rain. Now that he has bowed to the pressure and has plugged the loophole in his Countdown Acid Rain program regarding Ontario Hydro's discharges, we ask the minister again to bring the details before this House as to what steps Hydro is going to take to reduce its emissions.

We want to know. When are we going to see this government meet its commitment on scrubbers for the coal-fired generating stations? When

are we going to see the commitment on the increased use of low-sulphur coal? When are we going to see some of the practical measures that are needed in order to meet the acid rain target?

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

Mr. Gillies: I also have a few seconds to respond to the minister's statement regarding the anniversary of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. I am sure all members of this House want to join with the minister in congratulating the LCBO on its very fine work. The minister neglected to tell the House that it is not only the 60th anniversary of the LCBO; give or take a day, it is also the first anniversary of the inaugural floating cocktail party thrown by the Liberal government in this province. We would want to mark that anniversary too. Cheers.

I might caution the minister that until we do something about the MISA program, if we are going to toast the LCBO today he might not want to do it in water.

1410

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Rae: I can only call this a very black day for justice in Ontario, as will be seen when all the facts are out and when the public is as aware as the people who have been involved are aware of the injustice of what has happened to Joe Kuhle; and if I may say so, the very disappointing decision of the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) in which I think he has avoided taking some decisions which admittedly would have taken a degree of forthrightness on his part. His refusal to do that and his decision instead to take what I regard as the much softer course of simply hiding behind the technicalities of the procedures—and I use that phrase decidedly—rather than looking at all the circumstances of this case is, frankly, a tragedy for justice in this province.

We now face a situation where the workers in this province are basically being told by the Liberal government of this province that they will simply have to refuse to do things they are being asked to do by their foremen or by their employers, not simply because they regard it as unsafe but for the simple reason that when push comes to shove the police are going to come in and the workers are going to be the ones who are going to be hung out to dry—not the management, not those taking decisions and assigning workers where they are supposed to be, not those who have the responsibility for assigning work. The responsibility, according to the government today, is clearly that of the individual worker

with respect to every single step that worker takes with respect to consequences, however unforeseen they may be, of circumstances beyond his or her control.

I can only say that this is not only a tragedy for Joe Kuhle and his family in terms of the extraordinary challenge he has to go through but also, I believe, an incredible injustice that is being inflicted on our entire industrial system. If I may say so, what I found particularly insulting, and what I think the workers in this province will find insulting, is that the example the Attorney General chose to give as to what the normal process would be with respect to a criminal trial and an inquest was the murder, by an inmate who was released on parole, of a worker who was working in those circumstances. To put an industrial accident on par with that simply shows how far out of touch this government has become with what goes on in the lives of working people, in the decisions they have to make and in their circumstances. To me, this is just nonsense.

I cannot understand how the Attorney General could arrive at this decision other than the fact that it was obviously the softer course. To have taken another decision would naturally have caused some concern because it would have been a decision taken at his discretion. It seems to me that the Attorney General has a responsibility to say not simply what the police believe to be the case in the circumstances—because, as the Attorney General well knows, their own investigation was only partial—but whether he believes in the circumstances there are reasonable and probable grounds. Not once in the statement did he say that the Attorney General of this province believes there are reasonable and probable grounds; and yet that is what is taking place, a trial is taking place, and when the Attorney General had an opportunity to review it, he chose not to do it. I think that is deplorable.

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mrs. Grier: I too am glad to join in celebrating Canadian Environment Week by looking at some of the achievements of this government and at some of its nonachievements. I would agree with the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) that he has done better than his predecessors: he could hardly have done worse.

Like the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), I point out that the spills bill he boasts about was in the accord; Countdown Acid Rain had a loophole which this House forced him to close; the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement pro-

gram has 11,000 loopholes; the pop can regulation is not working; and the improved fines were amendments that I made.

Where is action to put the private sector under the Environmental Assessment Act? Where is a drinking water strategy? Where is a policy on intervenor funding? Why is he talking about a national superfund? It is this province that has sites that need to be cleaned up. Why have we not seen from the government an environmental bill of rights, such as this House has supported on second reading, put into place and truly celebrate Environment Week for Ontario?

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Premier. He has given us assurances on several occasions in this House that the Meech Lake accord does not in essence change immigration practices in this country. Could he give us a reassurance today that he will not sign the Meech Lake accord if it does indeed alter immigration practices in this country?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: To address that specific question, as I understand it, it allows agreements reached between the federal and provincial governments to be constitutionalized, as is the practice now under the Cullen-Couture agreement that has been working in Quebec. That option would be open to other provinces as well, should they come to an agreement, and it could be constitutionalized. As I understand it, it is a regularization of a procedure that is going on right now in Quebec, and there seems to be a reasonably high comfort level with that.

Mr. Grossman: Let me understand, because this is such an important point: the Premier's understanding and his assurance to us is that in essence the Meech Lake accord simply constitutionalizes the current status quo as outlined in Quebec in the Cullen-Couture agreement. Have I understood that correctly?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It allows the constitutionalization of that agreement and/or other agreements that are worked out between the federal government and the provinces.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier is confirming today, as he outlined earlier in response to my questions, that his understanding is that immigration procedures with regard to Quebec have not changed; that he is only codifying the status quo.

I wish to tell the Premier today that in point of fact the Cullen-Couture agreement says nothing about the number of immigrants who will go to

Quebec. The Cullen-Couture agreement says nothing about the selection of refugees abroad. In fact, the Cullen-Couture agreement deals for the first time with quotas, contrary to the information the Premier gave to this House, which I am sure he gave in good faith with regard to his understanding.

How can the Premier justify signing the accord tomorrow when the fact is that if the Meech Lake accord provisions with regard to immigration had been in place last year, the other provinces would have had 8,000 fewer immigrants and Quebec would have been obliged, under the Meech Lake agreement, to have living in Quebec today 8,000 immigrants who are now living in other parts of the country? How would he sign such an accord?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say, with great respect, I do not think that logically follows from what has happened or what the intention is or what is envisaged in the entire situation. Let me say to my honourable friend, it does not in any way preclude the federal government from setting overall quotas. They set the numbers and gave the terms and conditions that would be arbitrated or worked out with the provinces.

Obviously, in this situation, the concern of Quebec specifically—and I do not want to push this situation to its logical extreme—is that it would not want to see Quebec overwhelmed with millions of English-speaking immigrants; it would change the complexion and nature of that province. As you know, there is a fear in Quebec at the present time that, with a declining birth rate and changing demography, that could diminish the role of the French language and the French culture in that province. That is why the Cullen-Couture agreement came about, which I gather Mr. Trudeau was a signatory to, as well as the federal government and Quebec.

I say to my honourable friend that I do not see it as revolutionary, as he may. It regularizes a practice that is in place now, but leaves the central authority with respect to numbers in the hands of the federal government.

May I say one other thing, because there is some concern about it? It in no way restricts mobility rights of immigrants inside this country; therefore, I think when my honourable friend understands the entire context, hopefully he will not have the same concerns.

1420

Mr. Grossman: My second question is to the Premier again.

I do have precisely that concern, because in point of fact, while of course the federal government determines the number of people

coming into this country—contrary to the advice the Premier gave this House—the province of Quebec, under this accord, would have been entitled to ensure that the selection of immigrants abroad resulted in 8,000 immigrants going to Quebec instead of other parts of the country, and obviously that is partly as a result of the selection criteria which will be developed.

In view of that, does the Premier think Ontario's interests are well served when the Cullen-Couture agreement is not only enshrined, but expanded significantly to give Quebec the power to get 8,000 additional immigrants at the expense of the rest of the country?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The first thing the member intended, I guess, to imply in his question is that Quebec is going to get 8,000 immigrants at the expense of Ontario, and then he broadened that to 8,000 immigrants at the expense of the rest of the country. In a sense, the five per cent extra is a plus or minus figure. It is obviously one of these things that is not going to be worked out with absolute precision. If my honourable friend is concerned that Quebec is going to profit to the extent of 8,000 immigrants at the expense of the rest of the country, I really think he is getting concerned about a not very significant point.

Mr. Grossman: Let us be clear. On May 5, when I asked about this in the House, the Premier took the position that the constitutional accord did nothing but enshrine the Cullen-Couture agreement. Four days after he signed the Meech Lake accord, the Premier was still under the impression that what he himself signed did nothing but enshrine the status quo.

The day he signed it, he thought something different from what the fact is. Now, today, the Premier is admitting that a change has been made in the accord which would allow Quebec an extra five per cent of the immigration in Canada.

My question to the Premier is this. The premise upon which he tried to get out of answering this question a moment ago was that the 8,000 figure represented my calculation of five per cent. In point of fact, the 8,000 figure represents what Quebec would have needed without the five per cent to get the Meech Lake accord undertaking that it would get its proportion of the population.

Without the five per cent, a simple mathematical calculation should have told the Premier, before he signed the Meech Lake accord, he was agreeing that 8,000 immigrants minimum should be steered to Quebec at the expense—yes, not only of Ontario but of the rest of the country. Was

the Premier aware of that when he signed the initial agreement; and can he give the assurance to the House that if that is our understanding he will not sign the agreement until that is straightened out?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Let me just tell my honourable friend what is involved, lest he get too concerned about the situation. What it does is incorporate the principles of the Cullen-Couture agreement on the selection abroad and in Canada of independent immigrants, workers for medical treatment, students and temporary workers; and on the selection of refugees abroad and economic criteria for family reunification and assisted relatives.

I say to my honourable friend—

Mr. Grossman: Keep reading.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It guarantees that Quebec will receive a number of immigrants, including refugees, within the annual total established by the federal government for all of Canada proportionate to its share of the population of Canada, with the right to exceed that figure by five per cent for demographic reasons. It is the right to exceed, not an automatic right to exceed and I am sure it will be worked out from time to time.

I think my honourable friend is suggesting that Quebec is going to profit somehow here at the expense of the rest of the country. I think his concerns are misplaced.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier has had several weeks to clarify what he believes he has signed. It took him until today to admit that it does more than the Cullen-Couture agreement. He has had several weeks to address the concerns I am raising, and he is just standing in the House again and shrugging his shoulders saying not to worry.

My final supplementary to the Premier is: would he not agree that, leaving aside the five per cent, had the Meech Lake accord been in effect last year, the guarantee of Quebec's proportion of the population out of our immigration flow would have meant that it would get 8,000 immigrants to Quebec at the expense of the rest of the country or instead of the rest of the country?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I tell my honourable friend that it is his friend who shrugs his shoulders, not me.

Let me address the specific question. The answer to the member's question is no in that regard. It is an upside figure. There is no automatic right to it and I think one has to look at

it in that context. I think my honourable friend is exercised about nothing.

Mr. Rae: I also have some questions of the Premier. Since the Premier has not yet answered many of the questions I asked him in my speech on Tuesday, perhaps he can take this opportunity to tell me what the relationship is between the clauses that deal with Quebec's distinct society and the charter, in particular what the relationship is to questions of aboriginal rights and the future of aboriginal rights and how he sees these clauses relating to the question of multiculturalism which, as the Premier will know, is also guaranteed in the charter.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Let me answer in some detail with respect to the three questions asked by my honourable friend.

First, with respect to the charter, as the member knows, the clause with respect to the distinctiveness of Quebec will become section 2 in the British North America Act. It will apply to the interpretation of the entire Constitution; indeed, of the Charter of Rights as well.

Second, the member asked me a question with respect to native rights. In my opinion, these are not affected in any way. In other words, the old system applies. Section 42 does not apply to the question of native rights. I would say to my honourable friend and to others who have raised the same concern that this will actually assist the aboriginal peoples to move towards self-government.

As my honourable friend will know, we had a discussion about this issue not too many months ago. Unfortunately, we were not able to pull the matter together. What we were looking for were seven provinces out of nine, because Quebec was not part of it. If Quebec is part of the Constitution, we will have a much better chance, in my view, of moving towards aboriginal self-government or native people's self-government in this country. In other words, we are working with a bigger number of provinces. Quebec has demonstrated a sensitivity in this area that some of the other provinces have not. Also, let me say to my honourable friend that it does not need unanimity in order to bring aboriginal self-government.

Third, let me say that because we have entrenched a process for constitutional change and amendment over a period of time, I feel very confident that this issue will come back on to our agenda in the not-too-distant future. I cannot give my honourable friend a specific date, but I think it entrenches a desire to deal with the Constitution and this issue will come up again, as I said in

the not-too-distant future, because I plan to raise it, I think it is important.

Unfortunately, two or three months ago we did not have the political will from the other provinces to solve that problem but I think that as things change, we can develop a consensus and deal with that issue. I regard it as most unfortunate we did not solve it last time.

Mr. Rae: From that question, the unfinished business from the last round of constitutional reform was the question of the relationship between, if I can call them this, the European cultures of Canada and its first citizens. That was the one process that was left in the Constitution. It was entrenched in 1981-82 and it was left in with some further rounds of discussions that just finished unsuccessfully in this past year.

Why has the Premier apparently acceded to dropping that failed challenge? It was failed by the Premiers themselves. They failed to meet the challenge. Why has he simply acceded to dropping that and to replacing it with Senate reform, which is on the top of the agenda of some other Premiers but not I would have thought of the Premier of Ontario? Is the Premier not admitting that by doing this he is in fact saying that the rights of our native people are less important than Senate reform?

1430

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I tell my honourable friend that he should hesitate to draw those kinds of conclusions. I think that is an unfair characterization of what transpired. Obviously, in a federal state such as we have there are lots of concerns, be they fish management, the entrenchment of property rights or Senate reform. As the member knows, there are a variety of items at the top of various people's agendas across this country.

I say to my honourable friend, I believe very strongly that we have not in any way impeded our ability to deal with the question of aboriginal self-government. Indeed, we are in a much better position to move on it in the next two or three years than we were in the past. I say at the same time, there is no sense calling the same conference tomorrow because the results would be the same on aboriginal self-government. It takes political will and it takes leadership. We know and he knows the realities. Five provinces were on side out of the nine. There were four that were offside, but things do change.

I can tell my honourable friend that I am one of those who is prepared, assuming I am in a position to do so, to bring that issue back on to the national agenda. Since we have constitutional-

ized further constitutional reform, I say it will be much easier. Without this amendment it would be much more difficult, because there would be no further agreement to have meetings with respect to the Constitution.

Mr. Rae: With great respect to the Premier, he is never going to have more leverage than he has tomorrow. He is never going to be in that good a position. In terms of saying to those who are around as we go into this renegotiation of the non-negotiated agreement, whose different wordings are still passing around, he is never going to be in a stronger position. I want him to know that as far as our party is concerned, he should be there pressing to see that the question of aboriginal native peoples' rights is at the top of the agenda for this country because it is unfinished business that we deserve to finish in this century and if we do not get it on the agenda now we are not going to finish it.

It is my understanding on the basis of a series of press reports that there are in fact different wordings for two sections, the section on spending power and the section on Quebec as a distinct society. I wonder if the Premier can tell us his understanding with respect to how many alternative wordings there are and which wording in particular he supports with respect to the spending power.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the point my honourable friend is raising with respect to native self-government, but I reject his point of view that it has been dismissed. I am also not comfortable with his characterization of it being less important than something else in the country.

Mr. Rae: Well, it is.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I can tell him it is important to get Quebec into the Constitution as far as I am concerned. There are many things that are important and I do not know whether one is more important or less important than another one. I believe it is important, and I believe we will be in such a position in Ontario; and I can say my friend the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has played a leadership role in this matter right across this country, to make progress on that issue in the not-too-distant future.

With respect to his second question—or at least his question, not his preamble—he asked me about the question of the spending power. I have been asked my interpretation of that question. Very clearly I have the view—I have stated it in this House and I will state it again—that any time there is an opting out under the spending power, any money that is transferred to a province has to

go back into, as it says in the Meech Lake accord, similar objectives and similar programs. It is not as if one can take child care money and use it for wilderness parks or for roads. That understanding is very clear, at least in my mind and I suspect in the other people's minds as well.

There are a variety of ways that one could put that into words in any accord. We can discuss the alternatives. I have heard a number of them; Premier Pawley has some, others have had some; putting in “at the discretion of the federal government.” Others say that gives the power and takes the power at the same time and it ends up not accomplishing anything. There are other ways of discussing it in terms of shared-cost program objectives. There are a lot of ways to do it, and we will be discussing it tomorrow.

Mr. Rae: All I can say is I hope that the Premier has lots of help tomorrow.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Rae: I would like to ask a question of the Attorney General about the statement he made today. I wonder if the Attorney General can tell us precisely who the police interviewed or what other interviews took place after questions were raised in this House with respect to the laying of charges against Mr. Kuhle.

Hon. Mr. Scott: My understanding is that following the matter raised by the leader of the third party in the House, the police spoke to and interviewed representatives of the Ministry of Labour, who were in the course of conducting an investigation or who had knowledge of mining matters.

Mr. Rae: Is the Attorney General admitting that when they laid the charge and when they went before the justice of the peace saying they believed there were reasonable and probable grounds, they had not interviewed several relevant witnesses from the Ministry of Labour?

Hon. Mr. Scott: No, I am not saying that. My understanding is that prior to laying the charge, the police had interviewed a number of representatives of the Ministry of Labour, particularly representatives in the north. Following the honourable member's request for a review of the matter, interviews of others in Toronto were conducted.

Mr. Rae: This is really what the whole thing turns on, the question of the Attorney General's discretion in terms of his obligations within the system.

The Attorney General has said on a number of other occasions that if he does not think there are

reasonable and probable grounds, he does not think a trial should proceed and in fact charges should be withdrawn. Can the Attorney General tell us, is that not his view? Is it not his view that he has to be satisfied? Does he think there are reasonable and probable grounds to convict Mr. Kuhle?

Hon. Mr. Scott: The various texts on parliamentary discussions of the role of the Attorney General make it perfectly clear that it is not his right to assess whether there are reasonable and probable grounds. That is a matter for the informant and the justice of the peace.

First, the Attorney General has the right to intervene to stay a prosecution under the Criminal Code if it can be illustrated that there is something in the nature of the charges that requires a postponement or, second, he can intervene to withdraw the charges if he is satisfied there is no credible evidence upon which the charges are based.

As I said in my statement, after the most anxious and deliberate consideration—these matters are very difficult; I would have been happier to have come to another decision—I concluded I could not draw that judgement.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Gillies: I have a question of the Premier. He doubtless saw this column in this morning's Toronto Star entitled "Another Questionable Liberal Fund-Raiser." We would like to ask the Premier about some of the facts of this particular matter.

According to the article, the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) is having a fund-raising reception at the University Women's Club on June 15. People are being invited to pay \$200 for the privilege of sipping cocktails with the minister. The invitations went from the ministry office, the office of the parliamentary assistant, to people directly involved in the health care field and funded by the ministry—doctors, hospital administrators, drug manufacturers, ambulance operators, officials of medical colleges and professional medical associations.

We want to know whether the Premier's understanding of the facts, as outlined in this column, accord with the facts in the column and whether he condones this very questionable type of fund-raising by one of his ministers.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I saw the article. The member can ask the honourable minister, when he comes, who was on his list. I have no idea. A wide number of invitations were sent out to a lot

of people. The member is welcome to come as well, if he likes.

Mr. Gillies: I am sure the Premier would not want to associate himself, even inadvertently, with Liberal Party fund-raising going on out of a government office, and neither would I expect that the Premier would want to associate himself within invitations being sent to people contained on ministry lists.

We have already had the infamous Liberal Economic Advisory Forum invitation. We have had people in the advertising business being invited to spend \$250 to have breakfast with the former Chairman of Management Board. We have had business people paying \$200 to have cocktails with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil).

Has the Premier not had enough of this sort of thing? Is it appropriate that this borderline influence-peddling goes on within his government? As leader of the government, would he not want to cut this off immediately?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say to my honourable friend that yes, there is fund-raising activity in the party—actually, over a long period of time, as my honourable friend will be aware—just as there is fund-raising activity in his party and in the New Democratic Party as well. But there is no one who can purchase influence in this party for any amount of money. That would not be tolerable. The ministers are not receptive to that. We are not running this party like the Conservatives run or ran their party. Everybody knows he is treated with an even hand by this party.

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WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. McClellan: I have a question of the Minister of Labour about decision 72 of the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal which, the minister will recall, broadened the definition of "personal injury by accident" to give a broader definition to the concept of "accident" than used to be given by the Workers' Compensation Board.

Given that this week the Workers' Compensation Board, after a six-month campaign to try to reverse, subvert, torpedo and delay the implementation of decision 72, is holding what can only be described as a kangaroo court to retry the case—it has appointed our friend John Laskin as its counsel, it has appointed itself as a party to the dispute even though it is also the judge sitting in judgement on its own policy decisions—

The Deputy Speaker: Question.

Mr. McClellan: My question to the minister is simply this: is it the minister's understanding of section 86n of the act that the Workers' Compensation Board has the power to overturn the decision of the tribunal, or is the decision of the tribunal final and binding on the Workers' Compensation Board?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: That may end up being, as the honourable gentleman will know, the \$64 question; that is clearly a question on which there is some divided opinion. I believe the reconsideration of decision 72 under section 86n is slated to begin on Thursday of this week and will continue on Friday. There will be a number of employer representatives and a number of worker representatives appearing before the board.

This follows, of course, a decision by the board to have a reconsideration of decision 72. I realize there must be some finality to it ultimately, but I think the honourable member perhaps would agree that it would be useful to allow this appeal under section 86n to go forward.

Mr. McClellan: It is simply unbelievable that the Minister of Labour has stood in his place and indicated it is even conceivably theoretically possible for the Workers' Compensation Board to overturn a decision of our independent appeal tribunal, which the previous parliament set up. If that happens, the integrity and the independence of the tribunal will be completely destroyed.

I want to ask the minister, as he is the only person I have heard outside of the Workers' Compensation Board take the ridiculous position that the board somehow has the power to sit in judgement and overturn decisions of the independent tribunal—nobody outside of the Workers' Compensation Board has ever said that until the minister said it in here—

The Deputy Speaker: Question.

Mr. McClellan: Will the minister give us an assurance that he will support my amendment, set out in my private member's bill, or bring in his own legislation if that is necessary, in order to make it clear that the Workers' Compensation Board, by setting up these kangaroo courts, does not have the power to overturn independent decisions of the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is obvious the honourable gentleman wants to have it both ways. In one breath, in the first instance, he says it is obviously and abundantly clear what the Legislature did in 1984 in passing legislation with section 86n; then, in the next breath, he turns around and says, "Just in case it isn't clear, I've

got an amendment to fix up any outstanding problems there may be."

Mr. McClellan: What are you going to do? Hide under your desk as usual? Is there any limit to your uselessness?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: We are reviewing a number of aspects of the act right now. I am aware, even if the honourable gentleman is not, that there is a divided body of opinion as to what is ultimately meant out of section 86n.

Mr. Rae: What do you mean? It's your law. What do you mean by it?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: There is divided legal opinion—

Mr. Rae: You're in charge. You're the government. You're supposed to be in charge. Tell us what it means.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is too bad the member for York South (Mr. Rae) and the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan), who are always the experts on 20-20 hindsight, did not offer these opinions when the debate went on in 1984.

This matter is under review by the board. The board will be meeting this Thursday and Friday, as it is properly allowed to do under section 86n of the act. We will monitor the deliberations of the board very carefully.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Gillies: I want to ask the Premier again—because we are not at all satisfied with the nonanswer he has given to these very serious questions—about allegations in the largest-circulation newspaper in this province that his Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) has used ministry lists and ministry resources to solicit funds for his fund-raising campaign.

Will the Premier not tell this House whether he has investigated these charges, whether he agrees they are very serious and inappropriate and what steps he will take to ensure that the Minister of Health and all his other ministers refrain from going after funding from the very people who depend on their ministries for support? Will the Premier not agree that this is totally inappropriate?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I respect the article from the newspaper with the largest circulation in the province. That does not mean I always agree with them, as I am sure my honourable friend will agree. As far as I know, there was wide distribution sent out. The so-called problems he talked about were dealt with, and I do not know of any suggestion of untoward influence.

Mr. Harris: Once again, we have seen the Premier's standards. I am astounded that he has not, by 2:45 p.m. today, investigated this matter, having been given the notice he was given.

We have seen the standards where it is okay for a minister's spouse to be arranging grants. It is okay for the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) to be dealing with his own ministry as well as others. It is okay for Ivan Fleischmann to have \$30,000 lunches with the Premier's people. I am astounded that he has not looked into this matter.

Will the Premier undertake to have a full report to this House tomorrow, in his absence, about what list was used, how that list was obtained, who obtained that list and whether it violated any laws or the Manual of Administration?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will not be here tomorrow, I will be in Ottawa, but if the honourable member has any questions he can ask the minister.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis) will please withdraw that comment.

Mr. Davis: I will find another word.

The Deputy Speaker: Fine; thank you.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

M. Pouliot: J'avais une question pour le Ministre du Travail.

Last August, six workers who were employed by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications were doing some sandblasting around Bala. While they were doing their work, they complained that the air they were breathing through the compressor was making them sick. That was in August 1986. While tests were being conducted on the compressor, they were allowed to use the same machine until October 2, 1986, which is in contravention of many standards: section 14, subsection 14(2) and section 16.

Bob DeMatteo asked for an investigation on October 29 and the correspondence between the union—it was represented there with six workers—and this ministry went on for about six months, seven months, eight months. Can the minister tell me why Mr. DeMatteo has not received any answers regarding the investigation, now that we are about 10 months into this atrocity, this kind of exercise?

1450

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am only vaguely aware of the specifics. I do remember the incident and the allegations of an untoward delay. I do not

remember the exact specifics of the Bala incident, but I have asked the director of the construction health and safety branch, Mr. Melinyshyn, for a report. I expect to get that report—I am leaving shortly—on my return to Toronto tomorrow morning.

Mr. Pouliot: The point is well taken. However, the ministry was made aware of this situation some 10 months ago and failed to respond, and the minister has had ample time. What is aggravating is that, with respect, we feel there is a coverup between this ministry and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. The workers were threatened that if they did not play ball with the employer, with MTC, their work was to be given to private contractors.

Will the minister endeavour to conduct an investigation to make sure that indeed there is no coverup and that the effectiveness of his inspector is in keeping with the standards?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I believe it was last week I was reading Mr. DeMatteo's letter and I must say the allegations he makes are very serious and they aroused very real concern. I made a note immediately to ask my staff for a full briefing on it.

As I said to the honourable gentleman, my staff were not in a position to do the briefing this morning; and I am not sure exactly why, I am not sure whether Mr. Melinyshyn was not present. I have been assured that I will have answers tomorrow. If there is anything further, perhaps I can get back to the honourable gentleman through a statement, letter or answer to a question previously asked.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. Ashe: My question is to the omnipotent Attorney General. Can the Attorney General tell this House why he and his sidekick over there, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes), have flouted the will of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the cabinet, the government House leader and, in fact, generally the people of Ontario and blocked third reading of Bill 188, which would permit legitimate—and I repeat, legitimate—bookstores to remain open on Sunday without the fear of police harassment?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, the bill is within the responsibility of the Solicitor General; it is not mine.

Mr. Ashe: Is that to suggest that any supplementary would be to the Solicitor General?

The Deputy Speaker: No, that was an answer. Your supplementary would be to the Attorney General.

Mr. Ashe: That is a question in itself, not an answer. We know who is in charge over there. I notice the Premier blushing with that fact. We know the Attorney General is the one who is blocking third reading of that bill. Why he would slough it off to the Solicitor General I do not know.

By way of supplementary, perhaps the Attorney General can explain how he allows the perverted community to shop at sleazy bookstores in many situations on Yonge Street and will not allow the average citizen to shop for a good book in a legitimate bookstore; and how and why on May 21, the day after he succeeded in having Bill 188 pulled off Orders and Notices, Justice of the Peace Joan Clute processed seven summonses dating as far back as March 29, which were served that morning by a Metro police officer on Edwards Books and Art store on Queen Street in Toronto.

When is the Attorney General going to get down to business, let the legitimate bookstores operate and stop this police harassment?

Hon. Mr. Scott: My feelings are not hurt when the honourable member calls me omnipotent, but he is going to have some trouble persuading my colleagues that is the case. They do not take the same view at all.

The fact is that the question is, in my respectful view, misdirected. The House appointed the member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor), who is a colleague of the honourable member who is asking the question and a very experienced, courageous and able figure, to chair a committee that was going to look into the entire question.

Of course he has brought forward a report just recently. The honourable member did not wait for his colleague's report to act, and I do not suggest he should necessarily have done so, but we now have the report. I think all members of the House would want to defer to the honourable member's report and to give it the kind of consideration that I am sure the member for Oakville expects. We certainly would.

[Later]

Mr. O'Connor: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: With respect to the remarks of the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) in answer to a question a few minutes ago, he made some reference to my position and my report on Sunday shopping being somehow a bar to passage at third reading of Bill 188. For the record, I fully support it.

The Deputy Speaker: How is that a point of privilege?

Mr. O'Connor: The report supports it. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to ask him to withdraw those remarks, in that they were totally inaccurate.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not an appropriate point of privilege.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. A point of privilege is where the member's rights as a member are abridged.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. We heard today in his statement about the government commitment to recycling and waste management and all sorts of other good things, yet just last week the minister was visited by all 11 of Ontario's regional chairmen who complained that his lack of leadership combined with his complete lack of any policy for municipal waste management plans, to quote the chairman, "meant that vast amounts of money are being expended by regions, area municipalities and citizen groups on consultants and lawyers in an attempt to satisfy a process which does not clearly indicate who ought to do what and how."

Can the minister explain to the House why his ministry is unable to give the municipalities the advice they need and why he has failed to give municipalities a clear policy framework within which they can develop their municipal waste management plans?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am actually surprised the member asked that particular question because, as I understand it, the member is a very strong advocate of the environmental assessment process. Certainly, she has indicated that in the House in times gone by.

Of course, the major complaint of the leaders of the municipalities who met with me is that they find the environmental assessment process too stringent, too lengthy and too costly. While we want to reform that, and I did give an undertaking that we would look at ways of making it more efficient but still effective, I think the member would probably agree with me that to capitulate to the demands of many municipalities in Ontario in this regard would really bring us some problems that we are trying to avoid with our new greenfield sites, whether they be sites that are associated with a landfill or another manner of dealing with these.

I think our ministry has given that leadership and has provided a lot of that information. I think what they are looking for is a streamlining of the

process, and I would certainly want even the member's input on how that process can be streamlined and still be very stringent, to avoid many of the problems I am confronted with today.

Mrs. Grier: I think what the municipalities are looking for are some clear guidelines, some clear directions and some clear criteria within which they can develop their own plans. They are not suggesting there not be an environmental assessment process. They are saying that when they phone the Ministry of the Environment and ask, "What kind of a plan do you want us to submit?" they are finding it very difficult to get any answers.

They also want from this provincial government some assistance to enable them to reduce the amount of garbage they are generating. Just today, the minister said his aim is to expand recycling so that 15 per cent of our household garbage is diverted from landfills.

The Deputy Speaker: Question.

Mrs. Grier: It is a worthy aim, but Portland, Oregon, for example, is currently recycling 22 per cent and wants 52 per cent.

Why has the minister not proposed that every municipality have a recycling program? Why is the minister going to spend only \$4 million this year, which would not begin to cover the cost if every municipality got into a recycling program? What is the minister going to do to make sure that every municipality begins to recycle and that his 15 per cent objective, modest though it is, at least begins to be realized?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member will recall I said at least 15 per cent. I put that as the bottom possible, so she knows I am aiming much higher than that. The honourable member has to take into account that, as a result of the regulation which the government brought into effect regarding the pop containers in this province, Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc. in fact invested \$20 million in recycling programs in Ontario, in addition to the very generous and much-increased amount the Ministry of the Environment has put forward.

Mr. Harris: Why did you cancel the program in East York?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I have indicated that if there are more applications forthcoming, as we did last year in-year we can indicate there will be even more money, so that even the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) will be happy at the end of it.

1500

I think what the member is saying is that she is really complimenting the Ministry of the Environment on the initiatives it has taken in this field. We will continue to please the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier), the member for Nipissing and others in this House with the expanded programs we have in terms of the funds we are allocating to them and the technical assistance we are providing.

INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL

Mr. Ward: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. As the minister is aware, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has once again called upon the federal government to provide funding for infrastructure projects. It is well known that the federal minister does not share the same concern and commitment as this minister, but could he indicate to us what steps he is taking to encourage the federal government to participate in major capital projects in large cities throughout this country and this province?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I will try to respond to this question. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which represents most of the municipalities in Ontario, is meeting in Ottawa at the present time. It once again has called upon the federal government to join with municipal and provincial governments across the country in dealing with the problem of infrastructure renewal, not only in the field of water and sewers but also in other areas.

I indicated at the last meeting of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers in Alberta that, in fact, I am very supportive of this. I have asked the federal government to become involved in it and I have received the support of other provincial environment ministers across the country.

It is my view that this is a team approach. If we had, as we had in years gone by, the three levels of government involved in this project, we could do two things. First, we could handle it in a more extensive fashion; and second, we could accelerate the pace at which we would be able to renew, those pipes primarily, and other equipment. As the Federation of Canadian Municipalities points out, by investing in it today, in rehabilitation rather than replacement, we can save a considerable amount of money and at the same time create a lot of jobs in this province and across the country.

Mr. Ward: Could the minister outline what new steps he will be undertaking to assist municipalities in improving the infrastructure?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: In both the speech from the throne and the budget there was mention made of infrastructure renewal, and I have given a commitment to our participation in that on a number of occasions.

One of the first things that always has to be done is the specific identification of the particular problems that are encountered by municipalities. In this regard, we have provided a 50 per cent grant to any and all municipalities which have asked for that grant in order that they can undertake detailed assessments of their problems. Then, of course, we have given a commitment that we will provide considerable funds, in fact a new program which will provide additional funding.

For instance, when people say increased water charges are one option, I guess that can be seen as one option. What that does not take into account is the fact that municipalities in Ontario spend a lot of money raised from the property tax base for putting in infrastructure as it relates to the provision of water and sewage services, so it is inaccurate to say we have the lowest cost of those services. In terms of actual water charges, that may be the case—

Mr. Harris: Explain why Bernie went to Ottawa.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the member for Nipissing would understand—and he is agreeing with me; no doubt he will be speaking to Moe Mantha about this—we will say, of course, that we are prepared to participate, but we do not think water charges are the solution at this time; they may be a component in the future.

REHABILITATION CENTRE

Mr. Gordon: My question is to the Premier, in view of the fact that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) has departed; and this is a question, of course, that the Minister of Northern Development and Mines would be able to answer.

As the Premier is probably well aware, we have the highest number of injured workers in Ontario coming from northeastern Ontario. Every year, 1,200 go to Downsview, 400 from the Sudbury region alone. Can the Premier tell us when a workers' compensation rehabilitation centre will be established in the Sudbury region?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: In response to the member, the answer is no, I cannot, but I am very mindful of the needs and the numbers. The member is also very mindful of the fact that we

have undertaken a massive decentralization thrust from this government. We have moved a number of Workers' Compensation Board offices to various parts of the province.

As the member knows, we have done a number of things in Sudbury that were not there under the previous administration with respect to education and health care. It is certainly our intention, to the extent that we can and as quickly as we can, to bring the services of this province as close to the people as we possibly can.

Mr. Gordon: I was very pleased to hear the Premier is planning to bring the services of this province to Sudbury as quickly as possible. I might remind him that the 1,200 workers who are going to Downsview each year are suffering the kinds of injuries that injured workers do have. It is not a very happy circumstance for their families. It is a financial drain, as well, and an emotional drain to have to spend time in Toronto.

At the present time, the regional officials have been working along with the Ministry of Labour and no doubt the Premier's ministry too, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. I guess what we want to know is this: is the Premier prepared to have the kind of input into a workers' compensation rehab centre in the Sudbury region that would give it a unique aspect? In other words, one that would really fit the injuries that miners have and that forestry workers have, rather than just having a Downsview model, which most people are very dissatisfied with.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We try to deal with each situation creatively, responding to real needs, not just to perceived or bureaucratic needs, and that has been the thrust of this government. The member will be aware of the economic activity we have moved into northern Ontario; Sudbury is one area in particular. The member will be aware of our very firm commitment to try to equalize opportunity, both economic and social, as well as in terms of social services.

I appreciate the honourable member's suggestion. There are many others we are looking at, at the present time. I can tell the member the philosophy of this government is to continue that. I think the members will see in the years to come considerably more strides than have been made in the past. I think that, by anyone's standards, more strides have been made in that direction in the last two years than in any other 40-year period in history.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr. Allen: I have a question of the Minister of Education. His ministry has been forcing parents

of certain hard-to-serve children to play dead-end parts in his legislative branch's fiction that there are indeed no hard-to-serve students in Ontario. I want to ask him about the case of Robbie Thompson, a boy who is 15 years of age and has the unusual combination of being very gifted on the one hand, but suffering very severe and multiple learning disabilities on the other.

After years of going through the hoops at the East York Board of Education, that board finally decided recently that indeed Robbie was hard-to-serve and found a placement for him. But the member's ministry, in a highly technical reading of a portion of the act, decided it would overturn that decision which was really properly, according to the act, a matter for the board itself.

Will he not, as minister, get out from behind those technicalities and tell us today that he affirms the right of the board to make that decision and let children like Robbie get on with an appropriate education, such as is their just due?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I can tell the member I have the Thompson case before me; I am reviewing it in its entirety. I am sorry I cannot give him a definite answer today. Since the matter was brought to my attention officially by the East York Board of Education, I want him to know that when I reach a decision I will be communicating with the board in question. After that, obviously I will be happy to share the information with my colleagues in the House.

1510

Mr. Allen: I certainly appreciate that a decision may be forthcoming and I hope it will be a positive one. It is difficult to understand the hesitation of the ministry and the minister on this matter. It cannot be the cost of placement because certain of the options the ministry itself has recommended in cases such as this are often more expensive in Ontario than they are out of it, even when they are inappropriate.

Can I draw the minister's attention to the fact that the surrounding clauses around the specific hard-to-serve section speak repeatedly of "the board shall consider the recommendation and determine" and "where the board determines." Again it says "where the board determines"; it repeats that language. It is clearly the intent that the board shall be the determining agent. Will the minister encourage the ministry to bring him a decision that is favourable in this case; and if it will not, will he use his own discretion and read the act to see what its overall intent is and bring forward a decision in the near future that will get

these parents and children off this legalistic treadmill?

Hon. Mr. Conway: The short answer is yes, the honourable member can bring these matters to my attention as he has just very effectively done. I can tell the honourable member that this case is before me. I hope to have a decision very shortly. I also remind the honourable member that it is a case that has been reviewed by, among others, the external review committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Madeline Hardy, who some time ago reviewed the case and made recommendations to me that were then subsequently passed along to the family in question.

FOOD CONTAINERS

Mr. McGuigan: I have a free trade question for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Is the minister aware that the federal government has a program that has been in place for many years governing the importation of fruits and vegetables in nonstandard containers, in other words, bringing them in in bulk boxes for repacking on this side? The practice has been that they give permits to bring in these nonstandard containers only when the product is not available in Canada. As a sop to the Americans, the federal government now has withdrawn this program so that our fruit and vegetable trade is subject to all the bulk containers the Americans want to ship to us.

At the same time, in western Canada, the Canadian wheat growers have a grade of wheat that they could send to the United States to advantage. As another sop to the Americans, the government has prevented the Canadian Wheat Board from allowing them permits. We have the picture of them encouraging imports and discouraging exports. I wonder whether the minister can tell us of discussions he has had with the federal people on any of these matters?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: As a matter of fact, this point was raised when we had a meeting with all the marketing boards here just a week ago. One of their concerns was the container standards that had been set in the past. They are certainly putting a lot of pressure on the federal government to make sure these standards are either retained or reinstated. The horticultural groups are very concerned about any change in container sizes. They are more concerned about bulk containers than about small container sizes in baskets or whatever in which the product is shipped to this country. They have certainly let their views be known to our federal counterparts in Ottawa.

Mr. Latimer has been in contact with Mr. Reisman about the concerns of the horticultural industry. I have reinforced that by sending many letters to Mr. Wise, the federal minister. I have sent copies of letters that Mr. Latimer has sent to Mr. Reisman to my counterpart in Ottawa to make sure he is well aware of the concerns we in this province have regarding any free trade agreement that may jeopardize certain sectors of our agricultural industry.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Education. On April 29, the minister recognized Durham, York, Carleton and Dufferin-Peel as the fastest growing areas in Ontario as far as students go. The next day he gave out capital funding for 1988-89. In Dufferin-Peel, he gave the Roman Catholic board 48 per cent of what it requested and the public board 65 per cent of what it requested. In Durham, he gave the public board 65 per cent of what it requested and the Catholic board 98 per cent of what it requested. In York, he gave the Catholic board 77 per cent of what it requested. In Carleton, he gave the public board 13 per cent of what it requested and he gave the separate board 14 per cent of what it requested. What is the matter with eastern Ontario? Does he not represent that area?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Will you please permit the minister to answer the final question.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for trying to restore some order to this otherwise civilized place. I want to say to the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) that this government has done rather well in terms of the capital spending it has provided, the capital moneys it has provided to the school community. I recognize that we have not solved all the problems; that is certainly the case. I can assure my friend from Manotick that I have not yet had to engage in the kind of, shall I call them Barrhaven calisthenics that I remember the member for Carlton-Grenville having to perform three years ago to extract what was a very-late-in-the-day commitment to one of the Carleton school boards.

We have tripled the capital allocation to the school community this year over two and a half years ago, and we will continue to meet the needs of all communities in Ontario.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Warner: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The point of order relates to section

29(a) of the standing orders. I wonder whether you would consider it an abuse of the rules when a minister chooses to respond by saying, "I take the question as notice and will reply later," and then fails to do so; that in fact he is hiding behind the rules and is not using the rules for the purpose for which they are stated?

Very specifically, I raised a question with the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) more than two weeks ago. He said he would take it as notice and reply later and he has failed to do so. I suggest it is an abuse of the rules and I ask that you consider that, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: I have to ask, were there any time limits to the answer given?

Mr. Warner: The minister said he would take it as notice and respond in a few days. If he fails to respond in a few days, then surely he is abusing the rules.

The Deputy Speaker: Since the minister is in the chamber, although perhaps not paying total attention, and since it is within a matter of a few days, perhaps he will reply to that question within a very few more days.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: In responding to the point of order raised by my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner), perhaps I might just note that I take his point of order as notice and will respond not only to it but to the question he raises within the week. I will be that specific, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

PETITION

THERAPEUTIC ABORTIONS

Mr. Partington: I enter a petition on behalf of 7,000 residents of Niagara region.

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas over 30,000 unborn babies were aborted in Ontario last year, the government of Ontario should reverse its announced intention to implement recommendations of the Powell report that would make access to abortion in Ontario even easier than at present."

1520

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MENTAL HEALTH AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Sweeney moved, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Elston, first reading of Bill 78, An Act to amend the Mental Health Act.

Motion agreed to.

HAMILTON JEWISH COMMUNAL PROJECTS ACT

Mr. Ward moved first reading of Bill Pr9, An Act respecting Hamilton Jewish Communal Projects.

Motion agreed to.

DRIVING SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO ACT

Mr. Ferraro moved first reading of Bill Pr7, An Act respecting the Driving School Association of Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT (continued)

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES CONFLITS D'INTÉRÊTS DES MEMBRES DE L'ASSEMBLÉE (continuée)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 23, An Act to provide for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office.

Suite du débat ajourné sur la motion de deuxième lecture du projet de loi 23, Loi assurant une plus grande certitude quant au rapprochement des intérêts personnels des membres de l'Assemblée et du Conseil des ministres avec les devoirs de leurs fonctions.

The Deputy Speaker: I believe that when the debate was adjourned the member for St. George (Ms. Fish) had the floor. Because she is not here, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere has the floor.

Mr. Warner: I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate on this bill. When my good friend and colleague the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breagh) spoke last week on this bill, I think he covered all the major points. I am certainly not going to take the time of the House to go back over that ground. There are two major areas that I would like to dwell on for a few minutes.

One is more of a personal reaction to last summer's events. I had the dubious distinction of serving on the committee that was commonly known as the Fontaine inquiry. It was undoubtedly a very unpleasant experience as far as I was concerned. I do not think most members—at least

I certainly hope they do not—relish the prospect of sitting in judgement on their peers. This for me was decidedly an unhappy event. Unfortunately, to date, it is really the only effective way we have as an assembly of dealing with problems that our colleagues find themselves with from time to time.

The outcome of the Fontaine inquiry was, let us say, not unanimous. There were some very legitimate concerns raised about the process. It certainly would appear that the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) very unwittingly found himself in the middle of a mess. The mess probably could have been avoided if he had had some good advice and if he had had someone following up. If there had been someone whose job it was to make sure that everything was in place and who followed through, that would have been of great assistance to the member. There is no question that he did not set out to do something he was not supposed to do. However, it had been clearly identified what he was supposed to do, and unfortunately, he chose not to follow the instructions, but neither was there anyone in place to assist.

I think we have to compare this situation with the situation in Quebec where there is a person whose job it is to make sure everyone has filed all the necessary documents and who outlines carefully to people where they are in conflict or where they could be perceived to be in a conflict of interest and to follow it through. For the individual member, regardless of whether he is an ordinary member or a member of cabinet, if questions are raised in the assembly about propriety he can simply respond, if he has already done so, by saying that the person in charge has filed a report. It seems to me this is a very sensible way to do things. Apparently, the experience in Quebec has been an extremely positive one.

I am troubled to learn, and I could be absolutely wrong about this but members know how rumours fly around this building—they are kind of a daily, no, kind of an hourly existence around this place. Rumours are always rampant. The latest little batch of rumours is that the Conservatives wish to find some way to scuttle this legislation, and if unsuccessful at this, to filibuster on it or delay it unnecessarily. Apparently, their motivation for this type of obstruction is that they do not wish to have the rules of the game apply to them.

I really find it passing strange for them to suggest that the rules that help to monitor the conduct of members of the assembly should

apply only to the cabinet and should not apply to anybody else. I suppose it is quite all right then, by the Conservative way of thinking, that members of the opposition should have the opportunity to find themselves in a conflict-of-interest situation and hope they never get caught, but the rules should not apply to them. I am totally dumfounded how any reasonable person could accept that.

I think one would have to be pretty naïve or insensitive not to realize that the esteem in which politicians are held by the general public today is at a fairly low ebb. That is our fault. If the public feels it does not have a great deal of faith in its elected people, it is because the elected people have let them down. It is so easy to point a finger and say that someone is wrong. I guess all of us think of the shenanigans that have been going on in Ottawa ever since the Mulroney crew took over. There is no question that their antics up there are very embarrassing. But the embarrassment spreads beyond the Conservative Party. It spreads to politicians of all levels and right across the country.

1530

When the public loses faith because of the activities or antics of particular members, soon that becomes generalized and soon they are upset with everyone: "You politicians are all the same. You're all a bunch of crooks. You're in it for yourselves." I do not think they meant the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) personally. But the public generalizes that the politicians are greedy, self-serving, in it as opportunists, and it seems to me that what we need to do is put our own house in order.

One way to do that is to establish a set of rules with respect to conflict of interest. I do not understand why members would be nervous about this. If one has nothing to hide, then what is the problem in indicating what one's assets are and what business interests one has? That, of course, as we understand through the Quebec model, can be done in confidence.

Only where there is a conflict or the perception of a conflict, is it brought to the member's attention that he or she may wish to divest or he or she must divest, depending on the situation, or that a blind trust is established: some form of saying to the public that the politicians are going to be above suspicion and that they are being forthright and that they can be trusted.

I want to go back, just for a few minutes, to the Fontaine matter, because it is so handy and because of our experience. Members will recall that part of the problem were the shares that Mr.

Fontaine held in a mining company while he was Minister of Northern Development and Mines. We know it did not result in a conflict of interest, but there certainly was the appearance, just on the surface. I am sure that any ordinary citizen would take a look and say, "Why should the minister of mines have old mining stock? That doesn't look right."

We have an obligation, then, to make sure those appearances do not occur. We have to make sure that all of us are not engaged in anything which could be construed to be a conflict of interest. It seems to me that, at the same time, there are certain tradeoffs. I think there are two major sections which we have to take a look at in the legislation.

One—and it may be tough for some members to grapple with this—is that this is no longer some kind of part-time avocation. The days are gone when the members would assemble for a few weeks and then disappear for the rest of the year. In fact, in terms of the activities of this assembly, except for Christmas and March break, either the House is sitting or the committees are sitting. If I am not mistaken, in the last break when the House was not sitting, there was a total of 12 committees sitting during that break. Members are expected to attend to not only their legislative duties here and in committee but also to their ridings, obviously, and I would hope, to their critic portfolios or to their ministerial jobs.

So there is a variety of responsibilities. For the life of me, I do not know—I will qualify this by saying that my experience, of course, is from an urban area, a riding of approximately 75,000 people, which is about the average in Ontario, but it is an urban area. My experience has been that, on average, I am spending close to 70 hours a week at my job. Other members, I am sure, spend more time, some maybe spend less. Cabinet ministers spend more time than that; I know that. For the life of me, I cannot understand how someone else would hold down a second job. Someone is missing out. Somebody is losing.

I guess the normal example used is the lawyers. They are able to trip off to court. I do not know how a member can run a law practice and put in 70 hours here. If he cannot do that and is not putting in 70 hours, then he is shortchanging his constituents or he is not holding up his caucus responsibility or he is not fulfilling his critic's role. Something is suffering.

We have gone through an evolution in terms of this assembly. If we go back to the turn of century and look carefully at how this place has evolved

from then until now, we will certainly discover that the role of the member has changed dramatically. This is not a part-time job. The demands that are placed on the job are certainly appropriate. I think the demands placed by the public necessitate that the politician be accessible and be able to respond. I would be really embarrassed if a constituent called my office to talk to me and someone said, "I am sorry; he is in court—not for something he did," which they might automatically assume—

Mr. Ashe: I am sure you have been there regularly.

Mr. Warner: Every week. Only when they catch me.

Mr. Philip: That does not mean he is out dining with the Queen.

Mr. Warner: No. "He is in court defending a client." I would take that as a very embarrassing thing to have to say to someone. The option, of course, is to lie to the constituent and say, "He is not available." This notion of being a part-time member has to go. For some members of the assembly it is going to be a tough thing to bite the bullet and say: "It is a full-time job. The demands are such that in order to serve 75,000 people," or in the case of the member for Scarborough North (Mr. Curling) more than twice that number, 150,000 or 160,000 people, "I have to work 60, 65 or 70 hours a week. I have to be available by telephone so that when constituents have problems or questions, they can reach me."

If we are going to do that, then at the same time there has to be, and there should be expected to be, a reasonable level of financial compensation. But we should not be setting our own salaries. I do not think that is appropriate and I do not think the public appreciates it. It needs to be done by an independent source, by people who are not beholden to this Legislature and who can be independent.

We have the Commission on Election Finances, which I think all members would agree has operated in a very trustworthy and forthright manner. Perhaps it is folks such as them who should be trusted with the job of determining our wages, so that we are not setting our own salaries and so that the level of compensation is commensurate with the responsibilities and the time spent here. It is a tradeoff. A tradeoff means members have one job and one job only. If they do not like that, I suppose they do not have to run for public office, do they?

It is not an easy one, but the other side of it is that the penalties are quite severe if we do not take this next step forward in the evolution of our

parliamentary system and our legislative role in the province. I suggest the downside is that unless members are willing to accept the philosophy that conflict-of-interest guidelines should apply to all members, and that members are going to be full-time and are going to be paid appropriately but are not going to have outside employment, unless they are prepared to accept those kinds of terms, I think ultimately we will see a further deterioration in the public's attitude towards politicians, that the public will become—cynical is not the right word—discouraged by what it sees.

1540

As the member for Oshawa pointed out, there are a quite a few flaws and some really bad flaws in the legislation, and they need to be addressed. That can be done in committee. I think, collectively among the three parties, we can come up with the kind of legislation that will do us all proud, and it should be a three-party contribution, because ultimately this legislation is for the assembly and so it should be developed with as much consensus as possible.

I do not agree with at least the first draft I saw, which says I should be listing my furniture and all my household effects. I think it is a touch on the silly side, but the public should know—if I have investments, then there has to be a mechanism so that if those investments do in fact bring me into conflict or a perception of a conflict, that is drawn to my attention and something is done about it.

Obviously, as we know from the Quebec model, that can be done in confidence. It is not a matter of having to publish all my holdings lengthily, as the member for Quinte (Mr. O'Neil) knows, in *The Toronto Star*. That is not what we are talking about. We are talking about an officer of the House who receives all the information and gives us advice on what should or needs to be done.

As I said, I am very disappointed if the rumours are correct, and I suspect they are, that the Conservatives are not in favour of this legislation and do not wish to have it applied to them and are prepared to obstruct the bill. Maybe they will have some sober second thoughts as to how we can collectively end up with the best possible legislation.

In closing, I think it is absolutely essential in terms of the public trust that we develop a set of guidelines which cover all of us here and whoever follows, so that we can try to rebuild the public trust in its elected people.

This is a form of government which we happen to think is the best form in the world. It is not without its flaws, but it is the best form—at least I happen to think it is—and if we want this form of government, a parliamentary form, to survive and to even do better, then we have to build public trust. One way to do that is by ensuring, for the public's sake, that politicians will not have a conflict of interest and will not have the perception of a conflict of interest.

It is our job to do that, and I invite the Conservatives to join rather than to fight this process.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Questions and comments?

Interjection.

Mr. Warner: He wants me to repeat what I said.

The Acting Speaker: No, it is not necessary.

Mr. Ashe: I intend to speak relatively briefly on Bill 23, An Act to provide for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office. In actual fact, the title of Bill 23 should be "An Act for the Premier to cop out of Conflict-of-Interest Enforcement on Members of his Cabinet." Really, that is what Bill 23 is all about.

It is unfortunate that we end up with a piece of legislation that comes to us because of several negative happenings. I will not go into the details of all those. Of course, they were gone into in a very excellent manner and were once again put on the record last week by my colleague the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope). I am sure that before the day is out we will have other opportunities to put some of the facts back on the record, but it really is too bad that when this government took office—I will not say "won and came to office" but "took office" some two years ago; thanks, of course, to the support, and I think probably now with some regret, of the party on the left—we found out that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) really was not too concerned about the issue of conflict of interest among his members of cabinet, his members of executive council.

What did he do? He took the previous guidelines that were established by the prior administration, looked at them and said: "Well, now, we have some guidelines here. Let us kind of cut them in half. We will water them down and they should be good enough because we are all a bunch of good guys and we would never do anything wrong in any event." It sounds like the Mr. Clean commercial except that we all know

what Mr. Clean is for. It is to clean out some of the dirt.

We found, lo and behold, that it was not too long before some of the dirt started to come to the surface. In fact, after the dirt came to the surface on a couple of occasions, the Premier asked the former Lieutenant Governor, John Black Aird, to look into the matter, to consult with others and with members of his executive council and to make a report.

He found out that a significant percentage of the executive council was in some form of conflict, albeit—and I acknowledge this and put it on the record—the majority of those conflicts were not significant. There were a few, as we well know, that were significant. In fact, a couple of those members are no longer part of the executive council. I look at this act and that is exactly what this is all about. In that sense I find it very distasteful.

If the issue had come about because of a very positive reasoning—to make sure people in government always kept on the straight and narrow—that would have been fine, but I would suggest it is becoming more and more difficult in this day and age to attract and to make it attractive to competent people—competent business people, competent professional people and, yes, even competent union leaders—to think of a career serving their fellow man.

In fact, what we are doing in my view with what is included in Bill 23—that is to say, suggesting that all members be brought under the purview of this act—is just making it that much less attractive to attract successful people from out there who want to get into this so-called rat race. I think, frankly, it is probably better named in that regard than it ever was before.

I think many people, whether they are successful in business, successful in the professions or successful in whatever endeavours they have undertaken, feel they can quite legitimately have a little bit of privacy in their personal and private lives and that their immediate families can have a little privacy in their immediate lives.

When you take on the onerous responsibility of a cabinet position—and, frankly, to a great degree as we had it under the previous administration when the parliamentary assistant agrees to take on the extra responsibilities and duties thereto and is assisting a minister—then you know what you are getting into. You know you are giving up some of those rights and some of that privacy and saying, "Okay, I am prepared to put it all out there."

Now it would appear that before, many of the members opposite did not do that. They really did not know what the rules were all about. The Premier thought it was just a kind of game anyway, so he did not bother to check to see who was actually complying with the guidelines as they then were, even though they were watered down. I do not think the same kind of onus should be on the private member.

Again, I feel very strongly that in anything—anything at all—we do to discourage people in whatever walk of life to run for public office, we are doing a disservice to the future administrations of this province of ours. It has been more and more difficult to get good candidates, and I would suggest that the passage of Bill 23 in its present form would make that more difficult again.

I have no problems at all in setting down in legislation what the guidelines and requirements are for a member of the executive council. I have no problem with that at all. Somebody could say before, “Well, they were only guidelines.”

I can tell the members that under the former administration, yes, they were guidelines, but I can assure the members also they were strictly overseen and strictly enforced, something this Premier chose not to do. Of course, he will have to answer to that and in fact he has had the opportunity on a few occasions to not answer why he did not think of that being a more serious part of his responsibilities.

In this particular piece of legislation, the setting out of the requirements for members of cabinet, I really do think is appropriate and I have no difficulties with that at all. I have no great difficulty even with the general process that is suggested, albeit it looks like another political appointment in the offing for the office of a commissioner who is an officer of the assembly.

1550

I can see who appoints that, of course. “The commissioner shall be paid such remuneration and allowances as are fixed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council” and, of course, his cabinet. He is appointed by cabinet and removed by cabinet. So that is one more little bit of patronage that can go to the people sitting around the cabinet table.

It would be very interesting to note—and I appreciate this bill, in any form, is not law as yet—section 6 on page 4.

(1) “The executive council, a member of the executive council or an employee of a ministry (other than an employee of an agency, board or commission) shall not knowingly,...

“(b) award or approve a contract with, or grant a benefit to, a former member of the executive council who has, during the 12 months after the date when he or she ceased to hold office, made representations in respect of the contract or benefit.”

I would suggest to the members that immediately they have a former member of the executive council—an immediate past member, the member from Cochrane North—who would already not be fulfilling not only the spirit, but also the word of that particular clause 6(1)(b), when in fact just recently a company that he undoubtedly—and the record shows—made representations on behalf of—which are the exact words out of here—got a lumber-cutting contract.

In fact, it was not that long after he left the round table—I guess oblong, but I am not sure what shape it is now—in the council chamber, that in fact he was awarded a substantial contract. That would be, in itself, in conflict with section 6 of this bill.

It would be interesting, if that section goes into effect, whether the spirit of that will be retroactive on that particular member. There may be others, but of course we are all aware of that particular situation.

I think I have made it clear that I think it will be very negative indeed to have practically the same responsibilities imposed upon general members of the Legislature as are imposed on members of the executive council. Again, I want to emphasize, that in my view it is not appropriate to have to put everything on the record to suggest one cannot do this and one cannot do that.

One thing I do agree with are the comments made previously by the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) that there is no doubt at all that if any member is fulfilling all of the challenges of his duties—whether it be as a private member, whether it be as a parliamentary assistant, whether it be as a committee chairman, or whether it be as a member of the executive council—this is more than a full-time job.

I can honestly suggest that when I was a member of the executive council a light week was 80 hours and the more common week was 90 hours to 100 hours. Although the situation today is not quite as onerous as that, I agree with the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere that 70-hour and 80-hour weeks on a regular basis are not uncommon, and those are spread over seven days a week.

Where most people think of the four-and-a-half-day week or five-day week we have to—I

think as a member in most cases, tying in our constituency obligations—think of a six-and-a-half-day week and a seven-day week, hopefully taking time out to go to church in whatever faith one happens to belong.

If, lo and behold, this piece of legislation, in more or less its present form, becomes law—and, frankly, I hope it will not—again the spirit of it is fine and it should go forth in some manner, but I would suggest not this one—I find one particular section to be like starting a game and three-quarters of the way through the game one says: “Halt, we are going to change the rules of the game. It does not matter that the participants knew what the rules were when they started the game, we are going to change them.”

I would suggest to the members, as I interpret it on page 16, subsection 18(2) of the bill, “Members who are in office when this act comes into force shall file the disclosure statement required by section 11 within 30 days after this act comes into force.” That is changing the rules in the middle of the ball game.

There are many members in here, from all three parties—and I say this in a nonpartisan way—who, when they ran for office just over two years ago, knew what the rules were then. This would change the rules. If this is going to be obligatory on all members of the Legislative Assembly, I would suggest that clause should be operative for the private members only upon the next election, so members running in the next election, whenever it may be—and we all know it is not that far away—would at least know what the rules are. In my respectful opinion, you do not change the rules part-way through the game.

I can tell members that I am not speaking personally. It will not be any great, onerous task to make a disclosure of my interests and holdings, etc., but I still feel that it is an invasion of privacy on behalf of many members, and their immediate families, when they ran for this office without the knowledge that was going to be an obligation on them.

Again, if the government wants to make it for a future election, everybody will know it in advance. I am not suggesting it should not be so for members of the executive council if so deemed by the Premier. Frankly, if the government includes in that—as it was under the previous administration—parliamentary assistants, who assist members of the executive council, so be it. They are supposed to be covered under guidelines now, although as we have found out in many episodes, those guide-

lines were practically meaningless and were not enforced by the Premier’s office, in any event.

I suggest that if there is any amendment to be made in this legislation in terms of who is and who is not going to be covered, it should be to that clause I referred to just a few moments ago. Former members of the executive council should be covered under that one-year rule. It will be interesting to see what happens with the current additional assets that will be listed under the heading of the member for Cochrane North from the recently completed contract that was just awarded to him.

I guess in all these matters it is a matter of who is being gored, but I would think and hope that all honourable members, regardless of where they stand personally in terms of any legislation of this nature, would think what it will do for the future of this chamber and for the future of the people who will run to become members of this chamber. Bill 23, as it is now written, will do nothing to improve the stature of the private member and will do nothing to make it more attractive for private citizens to want to become private members in this chamber.

Once again, I suggest that if this goes forward, we should be renaming this bill. In that case, it might be appropriate to deal with it in committee and rename it “An Act for the Premier to cop out of Conflict-of-Interest Enforcement on Members of his Cabinet.” That is really what Bill 23 is all about.

Mr. Ward: I have just one question. Would the member for Durham West not concede that, should the date of proclamation be set at such a time as to coincide with the end of this parliamentary session, then it would be setting the rules, not in the middle of the game or halfway through the game or three quarters of the way through the game, but for the new players in that game at a subsequent date? I really do not understand the member’s concern in that regard. Whether the bill is introduced and brought into force of law at this time or early in a new session, the effect is the same. Frankly, I do not understand that concern.

Would the member not concede that certainly in terms of public confidence in the ability of members to carry out their duties in a way that does not benefit them directly—with his experience, if he looked at municipal legislation, which clearly enunciates under what parameters a member has to declare a conflict of interest, can he not see situations where even a private member of this Legislature, even an opposition

member, could have an indirect pecuniary interest in matters that are before this House?

1600

Mr. Ashe: There is no doubt that subsection 18(1) does suggest, as the member has pointed out, this act comes into force on a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor. If what the member alludes to is in fact the intention of the government, why did it not say this act will come into force on the date of the proclamation of the next election or whatever? It does not say what he says it might say.

I suggest that there are, again, different parts of this bill. As far as coverage of the executive council, it should already be in effect. It is the private member that I am talking about. In fact, I do not see any comparison at all between the potential conflicts that are there on a regular basis to a member of a municipal council—and I have been there, both as mayor and as a deputy reeve of a former township—where we are talking potential conflict, particularly in a developing municipality, on a regular basis. I suggest it is very difficult as a private member to virtually ever come into a situation of conflict when we are talking about province-wide matters and the dealing of anything ultimately by 125 or, in the next Legislature, 130 members. I suggest one member would have a great deal of difficulty having any particular personal interest accrue to him or her only, that would not be of a general nature and of benefit to the total province; which is not already excluded, as the member knows, within this legislation.

Mr. Philip: I would like to address myself to some general themes in the development of this legislation and of course participate in a clause-by-clause debate on specific items in the bill.

The argument that this bill somehow allows the Premier and cabinet to cop out of their responsibilities is one I find very hard to understand. Essentially, if one looks at the bill, one sees that what it sets in place is an independent arbitrator, an arbitrator who can come down with some very serious judgements that will affect the life of a government or the career of a member of the Legislature.

No one argues that somehow, as a result of the existence of the provincial auditor, the responsibility of the chairman of the Management Board to see that there is efficient running of government for the taxpayers is removed. No one suggests that somehow, as a result of the provincial auditor being in place, the internal audit program in a ministry is removed or, indeed, in the event that the provincial auditor in

an independent way finds a ministry to be guilty of some mismanagement, that that is not a greater condemnation than what would be found under some kind of vague, general guidelines or ministerial responsibility where political games could be played and, in fact, where facts could be hidden.

As someone who participated in the rather long, rather warm and very tiresome exercise of the Wyda inquiry, it is fairly evident to me that the whole process of conflict of interest has to be taken out of the political realm and given to an independent adjudicator. That is what this bill does. It allows any member or any group of people through a member, under section 14, to have an independent adjudication if that member feels there is another member who is in some kind of conflict:

“A member who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that another member is in contravention of this act may, by application in writing setting out the grounds for the belief and the nature of the contravention alleged, request that the commissioner give an opinion respecting the compliance of the other member with the provisions of this act.”

It clearly provides for someone, most likely a member of the opposition but under this bill it need not be, to request an independent adjudication, in the same way that one could request the Provincial Auditor to look into an abuse in terms of other aspects of government management, and get that kind of independent adjudication.

It also gives some safeguards to the member, for there is an independent person who will, on the application of the member, give a written opinion as to whether or not there is the potential for conflict. So it serves both the public and, I suggest to the members, it serves the purpose of the member who may have some doubt.

What was fairly clear in the Wyda inquiry was that there were various opinions as to where the particular cabinet minister or her spouse obtained information, what information was in fact provided and whether there was a conflict in the opinions that were being given by the office of the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and by other offices. There was that area of grey where one could argue an opinion was obtained but it was not really obtained, where there was a conflict between information and opinions coming out of the office of the Premier and those of the Attorney General's office.

What this does is to remove that area of doubt. Any member in this House will have an opportunity to go and say, “I want an opinion on

my situation,” and obtain that opinion. In a sense, that provides some safeguard to the member as well as to the public.

I suggest that just because the government has the legislation in place does not in any way remove the onus on the government not only to be clean but also to appear to be clean. I think it is analogous to the kinds of statements which have been made over the years in the House of Commons by various Prime Ministers, who in dealing with conflicts of interest have always said it is not good enough just to meet the letter of the law or the letter of the regulations but in fact there is an extra onus on government, and indeed on the Prime Minister, to make sure this is happening.

In November 1964, Prime Minister Pearson, in a public warning to his ministers and their staff about the need for high standards of conduct, observed:

“It is by no means sufficient for a person in the office of a minister, or in any other position of responsibility in the public service, to act within the law. That goes without saying. Much more is required. There is an obligation not simply to observe the law but to act in a manner so scrupulous that it will bear the closest public scrutiny. The conduct of public business must be beyond the questions in terms of moral standards, objectivity and equality of treatment.”

More recently, the current federal code states:

“Public office holders have an obligation to act in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny, an obligation that is not fully discharged by simply acting within the law.”

By the mere enactment of this legislation, I suggest that we do not remove the obligation of the Premier or the cabinet to deal with the very onerous responsibility of ensuring that cabinet ministers and parliamentary assistants are not in conflict, but indeed that there is a greater onus on them as a result of the act, and over and above the act, there is the general principle which I think is accepted in Canadian parliaments that the members themselves, and indeed the Prime Minister, or in the case of the provincial governments, the Premier, have to go beyond that. Something must not only be clean but also at all times appear to be clean; to go beyond the letter of the law.

I find it interesting that, while in 1972 we passed conflict-of-interest legislation for municipalities, when it came time for dealing with ourselves, we in fact did not see fit to deal with it. Indeed, the present Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), on second reading debate of Bill 214, which was the 1972 conflict-of-interest bill, said, “We are not

here discussing the conflict-of-interest regulations and guidelines as they may or not affect this Legislature. On other occasions, surely, we can direct criticism at the Premier for not having dealt with this more fully and, in my view, by legislation.” The legislation has been very long in coming. We seem to have seen fit to pass conflict-of-interest legislation in 1972 for municipalities but have not dealt with it for ourselves.

1610

If we look at the history of other provinces, we see an interesting pattern. The Alberta act was passed in 1983; the British Columbia act in 1979; the Manitoba act, which certainly has the stiffest penalties, in 1983 and later proclaimed in 1985; New Brunswick in 1978; Newfoundland in 1982; Nova Scotia in 1974; Quebec in 1982 and Saskatchewan in 1979.

Essentially, eight Canadian provinces saw fit to pass legislation respecting conflict of interest by provincial legislators, including cabinet ministers. Ontario and Prince Edward Island were the only holdouts or jurisdictions that had no law governing conflict of interest.

Generally, if you look at the legislation, you find principles that are not dissimilar from what is found in this bill. You find that the legislation across the provinces generally prohibits conflict of interest, either directly or indirectly. You find that they define a member's conflict to encompass spouses, minor children and business associates. You find that they require periodic disclosure of various types of holdings, such as land holdings and financial holdings, and filing with some independent body, such as the Clerk of the Legislature, or the publication of those holdings. You find that the legislation provides for ministers to place their financial holdings in blind trusts. This is an area I would like to deal with a little later in my talk to the House.

You find that the legislation in various provinces requires members to declare their interests and prohibits them from participating in a debate or voting on matters touching their interests, not dissimilar from what we saw fit to pass on municipal legislators in 1972.

Similarly, the legislation prevents members and their families and associates from doing business with the province in question. The legislation also prohibits ministers from benefiting indirectly or directly from the use of government insider information. The legislation also declares it illegal to solicit or accept any fee, reward or compensation for influencing any legislative or government proceedings. Our bill, of course, does that in the way of prohibiting any

MPP from accepting gifts in his role as a member. It provides for both judicial advice respecting conflict of interest and judicial determination of alleged violations of the law. The legislation also disqualifies members found in violation of the law from sitting in the Legislature, at least in certain provinces, and levies other fines and penalties and disbars members found to be absolutely guilty, from running again.

What we see then throughout the various other provinces is some legislation which I think we can see reflected in this bill.

The argument has been made that somehow MPPs should not be covered. I suggest to members that what we are seeing is a society that is becoming more and more complex. I think the result of that is that even though we are keeping the form and the processes of a parliamentary form of government, more and more it is true that we are taking on some of the aspects of a republican style of government in the need to use the committee system as a way of dealing with very complex issues.

The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere pointed out that there were no less than 12 committees sitting during the last recess. While some members of the public think that during a recess all of us are somehow off on holidays, I think I had two weeks off during the last so-called recess and that was spent in my riding.

The rest of the time I was on three different committees. It is fair to say that, in the case of those committees, recommendations were made that the government felt obliged to say it was at least carefully considering and, in the case of one of the committees, that it would be implementing.

So the average MPP, under the process that is evolving, both here and in the House of Commons, has more responsibility and probably more influence than has happened historically or, when we meet some of our colleagues in some of the smaller provinces, than happens in those societies, where they tend to be dealing with issues that at least involve considerably less money, where most people know one another and where certainly the cabinet makes all major decisions.

As we start getting into a complex society like Ontario—and I made this point in addressing the public accounts convention two years ago—it becomes more and more necessary to devise mechanisms and processes whereby MPPs can have an influence on government. I think that this is happening, both in the House of Commons and in our Legislature.

Thus we are faced with two conclusions. One is that being an MPP in this province—unlike, perhaps, Prince Edward Island or one or two of the other smaller provinces—has to be a full-time job. There is no way in which one can deal with the complexities of our system, there is no way in which one can deal with the very large numbers of constituents—in many cases, some 80,000 people—without being a full-time MPP.

Second, it is fairly clear that the average MPP, be he a government back-bencher or an opposition member, does have direct influence, if he wishes to use it and is acting responsibly, on policy. Perhaps we see this more under a minority government, where MPPs will move amendments that can be carried more easily than under a majority government. None the less, the MPP is, more and more under our committee system, in a position of real influence.

I do not think we can talk about conflict-of-interest legislation that will apply only to cabinet or only to the government because that is to simply ignore the realities of the evolution happening in this society, in this parliament, with the complexities of our society.

I would like to deal at some length with the Wyda report and some of the recommendations, but we can deal with those in committee of the whole House. I would like, however, to address myself to a couple of matters. One is that the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly made it fairly clear, under item 3, that civil servants should be covered by the legislation. This bill fails to deal with this in a direct manner.

It concluded—and those of us who have spent long times on the public accounts committee have dealt with this problem—that the top civil servants, public servants, have to be covered under any conflict-of-interest legislation and, indeed, that they also have to be open to the penalties involved. What is fairly clear to me, as a member of the public accounts committee over the years, is that one can have certain key public servants commit some of the most atrocious errors in judgement and still have them continue on. As the former member for Rainy River, Patrick Reid, used to say, “Heads seem to roll upwards in this place,” so that a public servant, if he happened to be high enough in the echelon and committed the worst sins, would simply get a different kind of appointment and sometimes, in many cases, a promotion rather than a demotion. I think the government and indeed the Legislature may want to look at recommendation 3 in the report of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly in this regard.

1620

Another item I think has to be looked at is that there may be those rare occasions, and I suspect they would be very rare, when it will be necessary for the commissioner to simply say to a member or to a cabinet minister, and it is more likely in this case to be a cabinet minister, "Notwithstanding whatever else happens, I feel that divestment is needed."

We had this in the case of Wyda, where from all the evidence we seemed to have, there were fairly clear instructions for divestment of a position or interest in a company and that had not been fulfilled. It seems to me this independent adjudicator must have that power, the power to say to a cabinet minister: "You must divest. There is no other way of handling this."

You then have the government in a position of possibly saying the only course is that the cabinet minister divests or steps down, or in certain instances the option might be that the Premier would say, "In this instance, I am going to move your portfolio in order to avoid this particular conflict in lieu of your divesting in this circumstance." But I think that has to be open and I think we have to deal with that when we come to it.

I think this bill really is the culmination of a very long series of events. It was fairly clear when we looked at the divestment issue in the Wyda inquiry that what the Premier had done was to weaken the guidelines while proclaiming that he was sweeping with a new broom and that, while doing a public relations job on the public, in fact he had weakened the guidelines and therefore the government got into trouble on this.

What we need and what we in fact have with the enactment of this legislation are some fairly clear and precise ways of dealing with that problem that evolved as a result of leaving it in the political realm, in the realm of the cabinet. Therefore, one has to welcome the legislation that is now before us.

There are absences in this legislation; there are vacancies in this legislation. I think what was fairly clear from inquiries the public accounts committee has done over the years is that there is clearly a need for some legislation dealing with lobbyists. Those of who went through the Wyda case and heard some of the horror stories about Mr. Fleischmann and other people simply have to say that there is a need for the legislation to bring in recommendation 10 of the Legislative Assembly committee, dealing with lobbyists. We are dealing with far too much money to allow those kind of grey individuals who float in and float out of governments without the public's

right to know exactly who they are and what they are doing.

While I support the principle of the bill, I am looking forward to clause-by-clause debate and, I hope, some amendments. I think the bill generally goes in the right direction, but there are some weaknesses in it we will want to look at. I guess we are beginning to see the beginning of the end of a very long struggle for which we in the New Democratic Party have fought and that we therefore welcome at this point in time.

Mr. Gillies: I am very pleased to join this debate this afternoon on a subject that has taken up a lot of time and attention of members of the Legislature in the last year. As several of the preceding speakers have reviewed some of the history and some of the events that brought us to this point today, I think it might be worth while to focus on a couple of those points.

I would think, and I share the concern of many members of the assembly, that what we do in here with regard to conflict of interest actually has a great bearing on the way we are perceived by the public and by the electors we serve, at a time when, I fear, the practice of politics and those of us who are in the profession of politics are not held in particularly high regard.

I can say, and I am sure I speak for other members who were involved in the two committees last year, that the question of conflict and the raising of conflicts on the part of any member of this assembly is a serious one. It is not a matter relished by any of us. Indeed, I think we all recognize that a conflict or a perceived misdeed by any one member of the assembly in fact leads many in the public to call into question the conduct of all members of the assembly. In other words, those transgressions, those problems that members or ministers fall into have an effect on all of us whether we like it or not. So I think there was a recognition that something had to be put into place that would more clearly direct us as members and particularly members of the cabinet as to what one can and cannot do and why.

I think we all know why we have come to this point and why this legislation was brought forward. I think the chain of events leading to this legislation started on June 10, 1986, when I raised the first questions about the problems regarding the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan); again, I would say, not a task that any of us would relish, but I believe a very serious conflict that had to be dealt with. That was quickly followed by the problems of the member for Cochrane North and, before we knew it, there we all were, many of us in this assembly, tied up all summer

long in two different committees looking at the conduct of these two individuals.

I can say—and I think my friend the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) alluded to this in his remarks—by the end of the summer those who were involved in that process knew one thing.

Mr. Philip: We were tired.

Mr. Gillies: “We were tired,” my friend interjects. Also, I think we knew that the forum under which we were investigating these alleged transgressions was simply not the proper way to go about it, in the long run, I guess. I do not think we want to see ourselves, as members of the assembly, back in that position again.

Committees of the Legislature are not courts of law: they are not structured in terms of the presentation of evidence, the receipt of evidence; there are many members of the assembly who are not trained in the letter of the law—I say thank goodness there are many members of the assembly who are not lawyers. I think the public is better served by having an assembly made up of people with a broad range of experiences from any number of professions and any number of businesses.

So there we sat, trying to get to the very bottom of a matter such as the Wyda affair or the Fontaine affair. I think the process under which we tried to do that was cumbersome and flawed in a number of respects; for example, the differences of approach. The members on the standing committee on public accounts, undertaking the investigation of the problems of the member for Oriole, retained counsel. We had a very experienced and very capable member of a prominent law firm in this city who assembled the evidence, interviewed witnesses before they appeared before the committee and generally tried to make sure that the standards he would associate with a court of law were in fact maintained in that committee.

1630

The other committee, the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, reviewing the conduct of the member for Cochrane North, chose to go another route. I am not saying they were necessarily wrong. I am not saying the member's problems were not dealt with properly by the Legislative Assembly committee. All I am pointing out is that in two conflict-of-interest situations in very close proximity to each other timewise, we had two committees of the House adopt completely different approaches in terms of dealing with them. Some structure and some uniformity had to be put in place.

I would suggest that we, first, took the investigation of these matters away in large part from a member's peers within the assembly and put them before an independent arbitrator and, second, by way of legislation—I think it was decided that was the best way to do it—struck a somewhat formalized and codified direction as to how these things should be done.

Now, through the legislation, the Attorney General has opted for the creation of an office of commissioner, and it is laid out in this legislation as to exactly what steps the commissioner takes when a problem of conflict arises. In fact, it is laid out in the legislation as to what we, as members, are to do if we feel we are in conflict ourselves, and it lays out in some very specific direction what steps we should take if we feel that another colleague in this House is in conflict.

For that reason, I support the institution of the office of commissioner, and I do believe it can help put some direction into and can help depoliticize the process we go through in terms of maintaining compliance with the conflict law on all our parts.

I do have a concern, though, and I am going to put it on the record, although I have done so on past occasions when we have debated this matter. I would hope it would not be the interpretation of any member of the assembly that the creation of the office of commissioner in any way takes away the principle of ministerial responsibility.

As we all know, our system of government is very different from the congressional system practised by our neighbours to the south. Their system relies on a checks-and-balances type of government where various branches of the government have various powers which tend to counterbalance one another. They have a very strong committee system which reviews appointments by the executive branch of government. I believe it is in many ways a very fine system of government but one that varies quite considerably from our own.

The principle of ministerial responsibility is absolutely central to our system of government, because the members opposite, a number of whom are present at this moment, who sit as members of the cabinet sit as advisers to Her Majesty the Queen in terms of the administration of government. Under our system, they hold office only so long as they have the confidence of the Legislature. They have the principle of ministerial responsibility as such only in that they have to justify their actions on an ongoing basis to the legislative branch of government.

That is very different from the American system. There is not a mechanism within Congress under which the executive branch of government under the President, on a regular and, in our case, almost daily basis, has to justify, explain and account for the conduct of government to the legislative branch. You do not see President Reagan walking down the hall a couple of times a week to explain to the House of Representatives or the Senate what he is doing or answering questions. That is our system.

My concern with regard to this legislation is simply this: I would hope it would not be the interpretation of any of us that the commissioner takes full responsibility for members of cabinet and the House with regard to conflict of interest and that this in fact then removes the ministerial responsibility of the chief minister, the Premier, for the conduct of his ministers.

I guess we could read this bill a couple of different ways. I do not interpret this bill as doing that. Once the commissioner's work is done, and indeed while the commissioner's work is being done, I do not believe there is anything in here that denigrates that responsibility of the Premier for his ministers. That is absolutely central to our system of government.

I have raised this caution because I do not look forward to the day when a Premier of Ontario, whoever it is—the present Premier or any of us—stands in his or her place because a question of conflict is raised and says to the assembly: “That is not my problem. Do not bother me about it. Talk to the commissioner.” I do not think that is the intent of the Attorney General's bill, and I do not think any of us would want to interfere in this very important principle of ministerial responsibility.

I give just one example of this concern and it is very current, from today's question period. When I or any other member raises a question of the conduct of a minister—I raised one today with regard to political fund-raising—my interpretation of the rules of parliament, and I believe there are citations to this effect in both Beauchesne and Erskine May, is that I should not direct, or none of us in the opposition or the House should direct, such a question to the minister involved. The parliamentary convention is that we question ministers about their ministerial administrative responsibilities, and that is a clearly established principle. I see you are nodding, Mr. Speaker; I know this is also open to interpretation, but I hope and believe that you share mine.

When the question of the conduct of a minister does come up, I believe such a question is not

properly directed to the minister. It is properly directed to the chief minister, who in fact has the responsibility for the conduct of ministers. I just throw that in as another piece of evidence, if you will, of what I consider to be the very, very important principle of ministerial responsibility.

Some of the specifics of Bill 23: The bill of course is sweeping inasmuch as it includes all of us in the assembly and not just the members of cabinet, who are currently covered by the guidelines. I do not share too much anguish with some of my colleagues about that feature of the bill because the sanctions under which private members have to operate are somewhat lesser than the sanctions that quite properly apply to members of cabinet.

There are those who will argue that “good people,” capable business people, high-income professional people with perhaps a number of business dealings under way, people who may be characterized by many as quality people who should be in government, may be in some way dissuaded from running for this Legislature if we impose too strict a set of sanctions against them in terms of conflict of interest.

I do not think that need be. I am not particularly worried about that because I think we have to look at past experience. As has already been said by a few members in this debate, there have been guidelines in place on conflict of interest in the province since Premier Davis introduced them in 1972—I have drawn this to the Premier's attention, as have other members of the House, in the last year—and those guidelines were substantially weakened and watered down by the current administration.

I am ready for a barrage of denials from my friends here, but I believe some very capable and probably very wealthy people served in governments before in this province under stricter guidelines than those as amended by the Premier.

Mr. Breaugh: Do not leave us with that kind of innuendo. Name names.

1640

Mr. Gillies: The member for Oshawa says to name one. I am having some difficulty, but there have been very capable people of some means who have served in government and were able to do so under stricter guidelines than those currently in effect.

The history of the guidelines has been the subject of some debate in the last year, but the key point I want to remind the assembly of is that the guidelines put in by Premier Davis in 1972 were amended by the inclusion of the so-called blind trust provision that the current Premier

decided he wanted to introduce in the formation of his government.

I do not want to get into a partisan wrangle this afternoon, but there were instances under which ministers in the current administration held and indeed dabbled in matters that would not have been allowed under the older Davis guidelines. So when we see a somewhat stricter law coming into effect with the passage of this bill, I do not have any particular concern that any one of us could bring ourself into compliance and serve in the public interest.

The legislation before us does allow a member of the assembly to carry on, not with business dealings per se, but, with the ownership of those things that have been allowed in the past under the guidelines. In other words, we are certainly not interested, and I do not believe the commissioner will be interested, in the nature or type of a member's home or indeed of a vacation property.

Other things are enumerated in the legislation: savings bonds and other holdings which are personal and private and quite properly held at the discretion of the individual member. There is quite a list here under section 12: "Assets, liabilities and financial interests having a value of less than \$1,000" quite properly. I will come back to that when I speak in a few minutes about the Blake, Cassels report that was commissioned.

Sources of income paying less than \$1,000 in a 12-month period. I have no quarrel with that.

Income of the member's spouse or minor children or of a private company controlled by spouse or minor child where that income is derived from other than a governmental source. Again, I do not think we would want to quarrel with that.

"Personal property used for transportation or for household, educational, recreational, social or aesthetic purposes." That one boggles the mind. I assume that is talking about art and things of that sort. I know a cultural highbrow like my friend the parliamentary assistant would want to make sure there was such a provision. Those of us from perhaps less patrician groundings are not quite as concerned about it. I do not think the Legislature wants to come along and seize all my \$30 prints, but you never know.

"The amount of cash on hand or on deposit with a chartered bank, trust company or other financial institution in Ontario that is lawfully entitled to accept deposits." Of course, we do not want to look at that.

Savings bonds, retirement plans, open-ended mutual funds. Again, there might be some

concern that a mutual fund still be held in a blind trust. I think we might want to look at that one again, and similar things, the value of pension rights, of course. I do not think the bill is putting an absolute stranglehold on people who want to serve in this assembly. There is still room to carry on the normal kind of businesses that we assume go with having a family, a spouse and so on, and I do not see any particular concern there.

On the question of conflict of interest itself, I am very pleased to see codified for the first time some very basic principles that should apply to all of us in the assembly, not just to members of the cabinet: "A member shall not use information that is gained in the execution of his or her office and is not available to the general public to further or seek to further the member's private interest" and "A member shall not use his or her office to seek to influence a decision made by another person to further the member's private interest."

This has simply got to be there, and I think this goes to the very core of this legislation. All of us in this assembly have had people come into our offices, whether here at Queen's Park or back in our constituencies. Members who have served here any amount of time at all have had people who come in and say, "I want you to do this to help me, my business, my interest, my club"—whatever it might be—"and there"—wink, wink—"might just be a little something in it for you too." It is one of the occupational hazards.

Any of us who have been around here a while have seen what can happen when a member crosses that line and know the response. The response, at least from this member, and I would hope and think from all of us, is: "I am here to help you and I will be pleased to do so if it is a matter of legitimate concern to a constituent. But please do not try to help me; I am not interested. Do not send a cheque. Do not try to influence the decision-making process that way, because it is simply improper."

We have all assumed and conducted ourselves that way, I know, but it is now codified in this act and well it should be.

The question of disclosure of gifts is again, I think, a legitimate concern. Most of us at one time or another go out to various speaking engagements and so on, and sometimes the people before whom we are speaking are kind enough to offer some small indication of their thanks or whatever, and so we all walk away with books and pens and various other little things. I got a book certificate for \$20 recently. My colleague from York Centre will be interested to

know I was delighted. It was actually one of the best things I ever got from a speaking engagement. We all get these things, and there is no way on earth that any of us is going to have our judgement clouded or indeed influenced by the presentation of yet another Papermate pen or a \$20 book certificate.

I do believe there is a very good provision in here under section 5 that as long as we are going around the province addressing these various groups and having little expressions of thanks, no problem. But if a member is receiving repeated little thank-you presents from one source then there is a problem because those little things can add up, and what a person or organization might expect one of us to do in return for the book certificates can become a problem. So, quite properly, this bill says we should disclose any gifts in excess of \$200 that originate from one source, and I think that is a very good thing.

I recall from my stint as a member of the executive council that those little thank-you gifts tend to get a little more extravagant for a minister than those for a private member. People are pleased all to the devil when my friend the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) comes in and does something wonderful for an organization. People want to thank him, and they probably want to give the minister a somewhat more appropriate gift than they do to one of us lowly private members, toiling along the highways in our private automobiles. They cannot give a gift like that to the Minister of Natural Resources. He rolls up in his limousine. They are all impressed all to hell that he is there, as any of us would be, and they want to give him an appropriate gift. But it becomes a problem. It does become a problem for a minister of the crown when some of those gifts get a little too extravagant. I know the minister would share my concern, and this is a very simple way around it.

If they give you something you think may be a little on the heavy side—and the legislation says \$200—you disclose it. As long as we all know about it, the commissioner knows about it and the information is available to the assembly, I do not think there is any problem. If a minister of the crown is presented with a piece of Ontario or Canadian art—a very popular gift for visiting ministers, depending on where they are in the province, is a piece of Eskimo art, and they can be quite valuable pieces—we would not want to deny the exchange of such very worthy cultural tokens within our society, but I think the disclosure provision is a good one.

A very important provision is that applying to former ministers in terms of their activities for a 12-month period. I think people of Ontario would want a provision like this. Those of us who serve in the cabinet are privy to information that is still valuable after we leave. I know things from two years ago, because I sat at that cabinet table, that are still important today, simply because I had the privilege of being privy to those discussions. Any of us who leave the cabinet table either by choice or, in my case, because we got the boot—

1650

Mr. Cousens: Now they will want you back.

Mr. Gillies: They will want us back one of these days, that is right. We cannot assume your mind is wiped clean overnight of everything you have learned as a result of your cabinet office. It is not. It is very proper indeed that we would want to restrict the way information is used by former ministers of the crown as well as current ministers of the crown.

The stipulation that is being recommended is that a member who has served as a member of the executive council will not receive a contract or a benefit for a period of 12 months after he leaves cabinet. Neither will any member of the executive council nor an employee of any ministry, agency, board or commission give an award, approve a contract or give a benefit to a former member of the executive council for a period of 12 months “after the date when he or she ceased to hold office, made representations in respect of the contract or benefit.”

Let us put that very simply. In other words, after he leaves cabinet, a person—whether or not he is still a member of the assembly, as I read it—cannot lobby government agencies, try to receive a benefit from government agencies or influence or attempt to influence the course of government action for a period of one year.

I think this is good. I think it is needed. Those of us who served in the last administration formed by this party are not covered by this provision. Even if this provision were in place right now, it has been two years since we served in the executive council. But, if and when the day comes, I hope soon, that this cabinet is relieved of its responsibilities, it will not be able to undertake these activities for a period of one year.

I think we would all agree this is good, simply because we do not leave that cabinet table suddenly with a completely blank slate. We know what was going on. We often know of government initiatives that were pending or are

anticipated to be coming on stream in the next number of months, and it is just not fair that we go outside government and try to use that information or try to influence the course of government activity with regard to that information. I wholeheartedly support that particular provision.

I might add that it is not at all unusual for former ministers, either at the federal level or at the provincial level, after they leave this place, to go into what might gently be called government or public relations but what others may call lobbying. There are a number of former ministers of past Liberal administrations in Ottawa who do that kind of work and there are a number of our former colleagues, no longer in this Legislature, who do that kind of work.

As long as the rules are understood, I think that is quite proper. Any time we spend here is a learning experience. It is a part of our professional development as individuals. Certainly, any of us who leave this assembly may want to consider that line of work as one of our options. I think that all this legislation is saying is, "That is fine, but if you are a former minister you cannot do it for one year." I think that is proper and I do not think it is too onerous at all.

Under section 7 of the legislation we still see, as it is referred to in the bill, management trusts, or another version of the blind trust provision that was in the guidelines. I have to say to the parliamentary assistant that I support this and I guess it has to be in there. I am not speaking for anyone except myself, but I personally really question the efficacy of blind trust provisions. We have just seen too much in the last year, both in Ottawa and here, that leaves me wondering whether they can work.

I will tell the members my concern. We have had ministers, both federally and provincially, who did indeed remove themselves from the front-line activity of an operating corporation of which they were a part. We saw that in the Stevens affair, we saw that in the Caplan affair and we saw that in the Fontaine affair, to varying degrees. I do not think we want to get into that right now.

Mr. Cousens: The next one will be the Kerrio affair.

Mr. Gillies: Oh, I do not look forward to a Kerrio affair at all.

Interjection.

Mr. Cousens: I do not want that either.

Mr. Gillies: "I am not a crook," says the Minister of Natural Resources.

Anyway, the problem is that I really wonder how blind a blind trust can be. I really wonder. We have a situation in the case of the former Chairman of Management Board where she did take the steps indicated. She may not have done them strictly on time—that came out in the evidence—but the member for Oriole did eventually have herself removed as an officer of her husband's consulting firm. In the strictest sense, in that narrow area of concern, there was compliance, but whether it is that or whether it is the Stevens affair in Ottawa or whatever, I just have to ask, how blind can a trust be when one's spouse or an immediate member of the family is still dealing with the company on an operating basis?

I do not think that problem will be solved by the minister's bill. I do not think it can be solved by any piece of legislation. I just do not know how you would do that, but is it reasonable for us to expect that a husband in politics or a wife in politics does not from time to time discuss the dealings of the family business? In a perfect world and under a perfect law or a perfect set of guidelines, it would not happen. But come on, we are all human beings. We know it happens, and we know it is inevitable. So I say to the parliamentary assistant, how useful can a blind trust provision be in that respect?

It does say in the legislation that a member of the executive council complies with the legislation "by entrusting his or her business or the management of his or her personal financial interests to one or more trustees," and then there are certain conditions.

First, it says, "The trustees shall be persons who are at arm's length with the member and approved by the commissioner." I therefore assume, and perhaps the parliamentary assistant could clarify for me, that a spouse or another immediate family member does not qualify under that clause, that in fact an immediate family member cannot be considered to be at arm's length from the minister in terms of compliance.

Second, it says, "The trustees shall not consult with the member with respect to managing the trust property," and third, "The trustees shall disclose to the member and the commissioner material changes in assets, liabilities and financial interests contained in the trust forthwith after the changes have occurred."

I guess this will all be subject to interpretation, but I do not even really see that one of our personal solicitors could really fit within that definition. We all have lawyers who undertake a variety of tasks for us, as most people in society

do, whether it is acting for us in the purchase or sale of a home or whether it is the drafting of a will. Very often, especially maybe for those of us from smaller communities, our lawyer is also a friend. In all likelihood, for members in this assembly, it would be most usual that one's personal solicitor would also be a political supporter. I am not saying it always applies, but I think in the normal course of events, our personal lawyers tend to be fellow Tories and the government's personal lawyers probably tend to be fellow Liberals. Why would one have it any other way? I am not saying that always applies, but it probably generally does, so you have to wonder again—

Mr. Sterling: If they want a good lawyer, they would hire a Tory.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I only go to a Tory when I do not want to pay my accountant.

Mr. Gillies: I think I heard my friend the Minister of Natural Resources say his lawyer is a Tory because he wanted a good one, but I may not have heard that quite right.

I think this becomes a problem then, and I think the commissioner would really have to look very carefully at whether one's personal solicitor or even the company's solicitor for the subject company could properly be the trustee. If the trustee is really going to be at arm's length, I think we have to be very strict about that.

1700

There is a description in the bill of the procedures that will be followed, and then there is a description of the responsibilities of the commissioner. I will certainly not repeat my concern about the role of the commissioner vis-à-vis ministerial responsibility, but it is a very serious concern I hope will be dealt with.

The question of disclosure is very problematic; the question of disclosure is a big problem indeed. This is dealt with in section 11 of the bill. I guess the concern simply is that the ministers of the present administration had a great deal of difficulty in bringing themselves into compliance with the guidelines which were in place up to the present time and had a great problem, it seems, in fully disclosing their various assets and dealings.

There was a report undertaken for the Premier of Ontario—again, arising out of the scandal problems that erupted last June—and he finally asked the law firm of Blake, Cassels and Graydon to undertake a full review of the holdings of ministers and their disclosures of those holdings and to report back. This Blake, Cassels report was eventually made available to

members of the assembly and I have a copy right here.

The problem was that, when the law firm looked at the current cabinet, at their disclosure of their assets and their coming into compliance with the guidelines, they found that, in the strictest sense of the word and the strictest sense of interpretation, only six of the 20 ministers of this government brought themselves into compliance; 14 of these ministers did not.

One has to look, then, more fully at the Blake, Cassels report. Anyone who reads it the least bit objectively would certainly not draw the conclusion that 14 of the 20 current ministers are crooks or anything of this sort, but there was just a general sloppiness and a general neglect in terms of their coming into compliance. A lot of the things drawn out in the Blake, Cassels report are fairly minor. I will go through them quickly.

It says here that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) was in complete compliance with the guidelines.

The Minister of Education owned—and I assume just forgot to declare that he owned—four shares worth a total of \$100 in 1982 in a Timbertown co-operative, which was something to do with re-creating the old lumbering days on the Ottawa River. I am not going to pillory the Minister of Education because he forgot he owned 100 bucks worth of the Timbertown co-operative, but it gives one an idea that, if one is going to take a very strict interpretation of compliance, the minister did not comply. He did not disclose it.

The Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) owned a one-fifth interest in a private business which owned approximately 100 acres of recreational land near Bracebridge and a few other things—a condominium unit which was the residence of some relatives and so on. Again, I do not expect for a minute that the Minister of Housing believed it was a particularly serious matter and probably did not feel he had to disclose it. His interpretation may have been, because under the guidelines one did not have to declare a principal residence or a recreational property, that his one-fifth interest in the land up north was his recreational property. Blake, Cassels took another interpretation and they say the minister should have complied. I would agree with that.

As we go through, with a couple of very serious exceptions, most of the ministers had forgotten to disclose fairly minor things. But I believe this betrayed a fairly lax attitude on the part of this administration towards conflict

questions. I am not saying anything the Premier himself has not said.

I remember very clearly, when the Premier came before the standing committee on public accounts on the Caplan affair, that he said under questioning that he wished, on assuming office, that he had devoted more time and attention to the question of conflict of interest.

Those are the Premier's words I am paraphrasing. He said he wished these things had been dealt with more seriously and that the problems with the member for Oriole and the member for Cochrane North had not come up. I am sure the Premier did believe that at the time because those were rather serious problems for him. None the less, they betrayed a somewhat lax attitude that we hope is arrested and reversed by the passage of this legislation.

I will just recap very briefly. The thrust of this legislation is a good one. The legislation came about as a result of this government getting into some trouble in the last year on questions of conflict of interest. I believe and hope that the government is now going to take a much more serious and sober approach to these problems than it has in its term of office thus far.

While I support the institution of an office of commissioner, in my interpretation, that in no way abrogates the supreme responsibility of the Premier for his ministers' conduct, and that very central question of ministerial responsibility has to be maintained. I believe that the sanctions, the fines and so on that the minister has included in the bill are probably appropriate. I note the minister had to remove the one provision he intended to include that would bar a former member from seeking re-election for a period of some years because of some transgression.

I understand the Attorney General's argument that, in the case of Billy Joe MacLean in Nova Scotia, there was some very serious question raised as to whether such a provision was constitutional, as to whether any official of the government of Ontario can tell any free citizen in this province that he cannot seek office for a period of time. I think it is very likely that, in fact, that provision would have been found to be unconstitutional and would have had to be done away with.

But a fine of \$5,000, a member's compensation being withheld, a member's seat being declared vacant and a member being, in effect, fired, are all very serious sanctions indeed. They apply to all of us. We will all have to be more diligent about these matters in the future, and I believe the province of Ontario and the people we

serve are going to be better served under this legislation than they have been by the approach to conflict of interest taken by the Peterson administration thus far. Let us hope that it is so and let us hope that we do not see repetitions of the problems that the government encountered in the last year.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments? Are there any other members who wish to participate in this debate? The member for Carleton-Grenville.

[Applause]

Mr. Sterling: That is the first time I have heard applause from the government side since I have been sitting on this side. I thank the minister very much.

Today we are considering the act which basically controls the conflicts that members and members of cabinet may be involved in when they enter this Legislative Assembly in relation to their private life outside the Legislature.

First of all, I think we should consider what motivated the necessity to have this bill before us. I believe it is as a result of the utter failure of the Premier of this province to pay adequate attention to his own conflict-of-interest guidelines and of his cabinet ministers in trying to meet those conflict-of-interest guidelines in the past.

1710

At the present time, we have two documents which control what a member may do or may not do while he is a member of this Legislature. First, we have the Legislative Assembly Act, which is an old act, but it does have provisions relating to this very topic. Under that act, a member is disqualified from entering into a contract with the government while he is a member of the Legislature. However, there are several exclusions to that provision of the act. One of those exclusions relates to a member's ability to be one of the shareholders or a member of a corporation that does business with the government of Ontario.

I think it is also noteworthy to put forward the fact that under this present legislation, if a member of the Legislature feels he is coming into conflict with the legislation, he can put forward a resolution to allow him to carry on that contractual activity with the government of Ontario and not be expelled from this Legislative Assembly. In some ways, our present act has some accountability for members, seems to have worked for a large number of years and therefore in some way puts into question the need for Bill 23, the present bill before the Legislature.

In addition to the Legislative Assembly Act, we have heard over the past year or year and a half much news about the conflict-of-interest guidelines that cabinet ministers are supposed to follow. These guidelines were first initiated by Premier Davis in 1972. Somehow these guidelines worked for some 14 or 15 years without attracting a great deal of interest or attention. Then when the Peterson government came in on June 26, 1985, we learned through various committees of this Legislature that after consultation with various ministers of the government, the Premier all of a sudden decided to change the 1972 guidelines that former Premier Davis had put forward and that his cabinet ministers had held to.

It is also interesting to note that over that period of time there were two cabinet ministers who resigned on a matter of principle. One was Darcy McKeough in the early 1970s when his name was stamped to a subdivision agreement in which his family had a partial interest. In about 1978 or 1979, then Solicitor General George Kerr resigned, not really over a conflict with the guidelines but on a matter of principle. Otherwise, the number of cabinet ministers, probably in the neighbourhood of 70 or 80 over that period of time, managed to live within the 1972 guidelines of Premier Davis.

As I mentioned before, these guidelines were not good enough for this government. Under the former guidelines, there was a straight rule that if you had a private company—that means a company that does not offer shares to the public—in which you held a share, it could not enter into a contract with the government of Ontario. This was changed around by the Premier in September 1985. He no longer said that if you had a share in a private company you could not enter into a contract with the government of Ontario. He jiggered the rules around so that you could enter into a contract with the government of Ontario and still be a shareholder in a private company, but you had to place the shares in a blind trust.

As we have learned, there has been a great deal of difficulty with that instrument. The speaker who made the presentation just prior to mine, the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), pointed out his concern over the use of a blind trust instrument. When we were looking into the matters concerning conflict of interest under the guidelines by the former Minister of Northern Affairs and Mines, we found out that neither the minister nor one of the agents of the trust company really understood what a blind trust was

all about, what their duties under the blind trust were or whether they could interfere with that trust or whatever.

We further found out subsequent to the Fontaine hearings and in the Aird report that another minister of this government, the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara), set up a blind trust and had joint trustees, one trustee being a financial institution but the other trustee being his brother. I hardly think that is what was meant by the conflict-of-interest guidelines when they said one could set up a blind trust. The idea of setting up a blind trust is to put the shares of one's company into a blind trust and then have nothing to do with those shares.

The understanding of this cabinet as to what was involved in the watered-down conflict-of-interest guidelines set forward by the Premier was very poor indeed. It makes me somewhat suspect whether the Attorney General and this government, in putting forward this bill, are really serious about this whole matter of conflict of interest.

We found out through the hearings when we were dealing with the member for Cochrane North that no one seemed to care whether the guidelines were complied with, whether they were not complied with or whatever. As the members know, the committee found that the member was in breach of those conflict-of-interest guidelines, and the member for Oriole also has been found in conflict with those guidelines. It took considerable work and effort on the part of a number of the members of this Legislature to bring those members before a committee and force the issue, before this government or the Premier would act.

One of the previous speakers on this issue, the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe), said that this act is a cop-out. It is a bit of a cop-out for us as politicians in general because it says to us and to the public of Ontario that we cannot keep our own House clean, that we do not have the integrity, that we cannot come out and be forthright in terms of what we are doing, that we will not resign when we are in conflict with our duties and have done something in our private world, that we need legislation and that we need an overseer to look over our shoulders and apply a rule and throw us out of here if we do not act properly. That is a sorry day.

This act is an admission that we cannot be accountable for our own actions. In that way, I feel very reluctant to offer support. However, in view of the record of this government and in view of the record of this Premier in particular—you

must remember, Mr. Speaker, he was responsible for the enforcement of his own guidelines and did a very poor job of doing that, so much so that, as has been pointed out before, only six of his 20-odd ministers were in compliance with those guidelines.

I will grant that some of them were in what I would call a very minor violation of those guidelines, but there were several cabinet ministers who obviously paid no attention to these guidelines and must have just filed the document in their drawers and not really done anything about it to try to meet them.

1720

As one goes through the Aird report, Mr. Aird looks at the various members, and in fact not only was the Premier guilty of not enforcing the guidelines for his other ministers, but he was also guilty of not enforcing the guidelines for himself. He himself was found in conflict with his own guidelines.

I would particularly like to draw attention to this because I think one minister has got off far too lightly in this whole matter. Perhaps it should have been brought to the fore. I think he should have resigned, quite frankly, if he had been doing the honourable thing. That was the Minister of Colleges and Universities, who failed to disclose interest in some 18 companies and who also had his brother as a trustee to act as his straw man, or who appeared to act as his straw man. I should not say he acted as his straw man because there is no way I can tell whether he was acting as his straw man, but he appeared to be acting as his straw man in terms of running these various businesses.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities was obviously involved in a lot of different development companies. I understand a lot of them involved real estate. For him not to be forthright in terms of his declaration in front of this Legislature—

The Acting Speaker: I have to advise the member that he is skating on very thin ice. As long as he does not make any allegations vis-à-vis a member who is not here—the member should just be careful.

Mr. Sterling: I am of course referring to the Aird report, which I understand is factual.

The Acting Speaker: The member was referring to the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Sterling: Yes, and he is referred to in the Aird report. All I am doing is reciting the facts involved in that report. I know they are

distasteful, and I find them distasteful as well, but the fact of the matter is that there were a number of interests, as found by Mr. Aird, whom we all respect, that were not disclosed at that time.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities was also the trustee for the family trust in which his children were the beneficiaries. He controlled a number of assets which, if they were traded properly or dealt with properly, would gain benefit for his children somewhere down the road. He did not declare that action or that position of being the trustee of his family trust. Therefore, I feel he was in a serious conflict with the guidelines. He should at least have offered his resignation in terms of being a member of cabinet.

Now, there was never any proof that he exercised that discretion in terms of any contracts that any of those companies might or might not have had with any government agencies. However, one wonders why he did not declare these interests. I think the Aird report is very damning of him.

I mentioned before whether this government is really very serious about conflict of interest or whether it is throwing up Bill 23 to cover the embarrassment it has suffered over the past year and a half with regard to the member for Cochrane North, the member for Oriole, the Minister of Colleges and Universities and a number of other cabinet ministers who were not in compliance with the Premier's conflict-of-interest guidelines.

I guess the most disturbing part of this piece of legislation—this legislation was brought in some time ago and has been reintroduced as Bill 23, but I believe was previously introduced as Bill 160 some time ago—is with regard to the provisions for entering into a contract by a former member of the executive council.

The member for Cochrane North resigned his cabinet post in June 1986, I believe, and then there was a summer by-election. In October 1986, that government entered into a contract that will give control of some \$40 million over the next 20 years to a company and the member owns one sixth of that organization. I find the whole question of the integrity of this piece of legislation, the integrity of this government in terms of dealing with conflict of interest, is called into question because of that act.

Six months after the member for Cochrane North was a cabinet minister, they give him a contract by which he is in partial control, along with his sister, of \$40 million of the taxpayers'

money. That money is going to be used and probably to very good use, but it gives control of that kind of money to the forest management company. Those were the figures of the Ministry of Natural Resources employees.

Clause 6(1)(b) of that act says that the executive council or a member of the executive council shall not knowingly "award or approve a contract with, or grant a benefit to, a former member of the executive council who has, during the 12 months after the date when he or she ceased to hold office, made representations in respect of that contract or benefit."

We know from the hearings in the matter of the member for Cochrane North that he met four times with Ministry of Natural Resources people to make representations with regard to the forest management agreement. Are they really serious about this legislation? Why do they have 12 months in here when they have already broken the rule? They have already broken the legislation.

It is not only with this piece of legislation that I look to the integrity of this government. I also look to the integrity of this government with regard to the freedom-of-information act, which we will be discussing again in the next week or so. Under that act, we are supposed to get all kinds of documents. We have asked for many documents on this side and are continually refused those documents by the government side. They say, "You can have them when the freedom-of-information act is passed." Do they really believe in what they are doing or are they just talking?

This government's record with regard to conflict of interest is not very good. It is abysmal and the public knows it. This act would not have been necessary had this government not got itself into such problems.

I would like to refer briefly to some comments another member of this Legislature made with regard to outside employment activities by members of the Legislature.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Outside activities by members of the Legislature?

Mr. Barlow: No, employment activities.

Mr. Sterling: To the Minister of Natural Resources, I am referring to employment activities. I do not know what else he would be—

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Where is Alan today?

Mr. Sterling: Coming from the Ottawa area, the Speaker will be very familiar with outside employment activities. We could talk about the former member for Ottawa East. I am of course

talking about Albert Roy, who I understand now is running for the nomination in Ottawa South. I want to ask the Minister of Natural Resources or the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), have they told Mr. Roy that he has to be down here more than two days a week? Does he know that?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: No, we are going to let Alan Pope tell him.

Mr. Sterling: If we want to talk about somebody who has held a full-time job outside the Legislature, I do not think the members of the Liberal Party have anything to talk to.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I practised law before I arrived at the Legislature and I have found it impossible to practice law and carry on my duties as an MPP at the same time.

Mr. Breagh: Or walk and chew gum, or skip and hum; there are a lot of things you cannot do at the same time.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

1730

Mr. Sterling: I appreciate the intelligent remarks made by the member for Oshawa.

I found that the duties of being the member for Carleton-Grenville were very onerous, that the hours I had to put in were long and that it was impossible for me to be fair to my legal clients and to my constituents and my family. Therefore, I decided to cease practising law shortly after I was elected.

However, to have a rule in a conflict-of-interest act might perhaps be in error, because I think the members of the Legislature should come from all walks of life. To compare the situation with regard to mine, where I found it impossible to do both tasks and be fair to both of the constituencies that I would try to represent, may not be the case for everyone here. I am thinking, particularly, of a number of our members who are farmers. It is difficult for them to sell their particular operation or to hand that operation over to somebody else while they may be elected here for either a long period of time or a very short period of time. I am also aware that many other members of the Legislature would not have the same kind of protection I might have, in terms of being within the legal profession and being able to go back to that particular profession at some time in the future.

I do not know how many people realize that the greatest number of members in one particular profession in this Legislature now belongs to the teaching profession. I suspect that is a result of the fact that they can get leave from their

particular boards of education and return to their jobs after they leave politics; and that they can, as well, continue to pay into their pension plans while they are still members here. Therefore, we have had a great number of teachers who have been able to give part of their life to become members of this Legislature.

That is not the way it is with a lot of other people who work for themselves or work in other occupations. In some cases, it is necessary for a member to continue some kind of association with his former employer in order to be able to go back into that job at some time in the future.

We all like to think we are going to get elected time and time again, but that is not necessarily the case and that will not happen, as we know. We are not guaranteed in any way, shape or form that we will be back here again.

I would only say in conclusion that it is too bad we have to lift this accountability, with regard to the controlling of our integrity, from the shoulders of us as individual members and thrust it on somebody outside this particular Legislative Assembly. However, I guess we have proceeded to that particular case not only because of the activities of cabinet ministers in here, but other political happenings within this country.

I am always concerned when we take a little more of the responsibility we have as legislators and foist it upon some outside commissioner, some outside tribunal, or when we make a law which controls our activities, as we have done in the Charter of Rights.

However, we will attempt, in a very constructive manner, to look at this act in committee. We will seek to revise it where it is necessary in order to make it a strong and meaningful act. We will very much look forward to working with the Attorney General in making certain that, finally, this cabinet will be called into line and will follow some guidelines because it will no longer have a choice and can no longer slough off that responsibility to some committee of the Legislature, as the Premier has done in the past.

Mr. Cousens: I would like to compliment the other honourable members who have been speaking to this important bill. I believe it is a very important bill, wrongly named. It is named Bill 23, An Act to provide for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office. I believe the member for Durham West had a better name when he suggested it should be called "An act for the Premier to cop out of conflict-of-interest enforcement on members of his cabinet."

I know there are some honourable members who have been very forthright and open in declaring their assets and what they are all about. We know who they are and we know what they are, and I believe there are many who are very dedicated to their jobs.

But this bill does go to the very root of our parliamentary system. It is seriously flawed the way it is now and will have to be amended to respond to some of the fundamental needs of what our society expects and wants in its politicians. This document that we call Bill 23, in the sense that it does go too far in asking for certain declarations to be made public, is in my opinion a very serious failure in this piece of legislation.

What it fails to do is understand some of the personal needs of those people who are offering themselves for public office. What it is going to require of them, under section 12, is a complete statement of all their financial assets and, under subsection 12(5), where those assets shall be made available for examination by the public. I realize this is just one of a number of problems, but I want to begin by highlighting that as a very serious flaw.

If the government is going to do that, why should it not have complete medical examinations of people who are going into public office? Why not have complete mental examinations? I am sure there are far more things to be learned if we put this cabinet through a mental examination, a psychiatric test. Let us really look inside their brains and see what is there, see what is motivating them, see how they are working, see what really makes them tick.

Mr. Ferraro: Are you kidding?

Mr. Cousens: I am not kidding, because I think as you start looking at this bill, which is saying, "Let us open up all the financial assets of members of this assembly," "if you want to go that far, let us look at some of the other things that these people are all about. Let us just look at what is their physical condition, what is their mental condition, because if this bill passes every person in this province will know what their financial conditions are all about. I think it is all tied together, if it is going to be that kind of government where everything is going to be open.

By the way, I tell members that I do not want to know how healthy or sick the Minister of the Natural Resources is, because to me he looks just fine. Maybe there is a mental problem that would come out in a mental examination, but I doubt that too.

Mr. Reycraft: Is that parliamentary?

Mr. Cousens: One never knows. I do not want to be personal about it either, because I happen to see him as a very close friend.

Notwithstanding that, this legislation is flawed, and I would like to discuss how and why it is flawed.

It is imperative for our democratic system to continue to thrive and survive into the future as many years as it already has. We want to attract people of ability. We want to attract people with experience from the business world, from the home, from many different parts of our society. We want people who have time and energy to contribute to the betterment of society. We want people who are interested in making this a better world.

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When you start looking at that, you see just what democratic government is all about. I go back to one of the old books of political science, *Democratic Government and Politics* by Corry and Hodgetts. The book has been around for a while. These men have always had a great concern for understanding political theory. For the kind of basic ingredients you want in government, they say, on page 11, in *The Study of Government*:

"To sum up this discussion, society is the total of social relationships within the given area of the earth's surface on which attention is focused. The state is one particular constellation of social relationships, men associating together to provide the indispensable conditions of public order. The state is therefore less than society, an instrument of society for its purposes. The government is the concrete embodiment of the state, consisting of the organs and persons who carry out the purposes of the state."

What we want to have in government is that cross-representation of what society is all about. We want to make sure that we continue to attract the diverse people, the diverse opinions, the range of men and women, young people and people of all ages, who care enough about their country and their province that they want to dedicate themselves, at least some of their time or a good portion of their time, to make it a better place to live.

I believe that is a fundamental tenet of what society is all about. I believe this bill we are debating today touches the very core of what we really want in society. It touches upon who will be the representatives of the people. If by its nature this bill is going to limit those who will be able to represent them—limit them because they

will say, "I do not want to expose myself and my family to such a public inspection of my assets and my background and I am therefore not willing to present myself"—I think we have to be careful. We must continue to try to attract as broad a range of people as possible and not be restrictive in the sense that they will themselves say, "I do not want to be exposed to that kind of interrogation, that kind of study, that kind of analysis."

We are dealing with the fundamental principles of what our parliamentary system is all about. When Dean Corry talks about what representation is all about, he says, "The aim of most of these schemes"—and previous to that he has been talking about different parts of the democratic government—"is to make the Legislature reflect more accurately the diversity of opinions and interests in the electorate." The day we do not have that kind of honest representation in this House is the day we have failed to live up to the primary tenets of what democracy is all about. If this House wants to exclude people, it will pass this bill unamended. What we have to do is to realize there is that opportunity for people of different circumstances who will come forward and give of themselves to the public.

I think many of those who serve in this House today have come through the process of municipal government—they have served on school boards, municipal councils or regional councils, they have served in county government, they have been leaders in the community in different ways—and are people who have come to know their community and know there is something further they can do to participate in a more active way in government. They have allowed their names to stand and have gone through that democratic process of being duly and properly nominated by a party.

Through that process, the people within their community bought memberships to their party organization and came out and supported them for who they are and what they are and what they knew about them. That person who presented himself for public office said, "Support me because I am willing to do certain things to make this a better community." I do not think there is one of the 125 of us here who has not gone and done that. We are here because we want to be here and we want to serve our communities. That is the fundamental tenet of this parliamentary process. Through the persuasion of others and our desire and our intent to be a willing servant to the people of our communities, we gain that public will and the people see certain individuals

as ones they are prepared to support in the nomination; so when you win the nomination, you at least have the support of your party.

At that early stage, the party organization is in a position to have looked at you for what you are and who you are. They know you as a member of the community or as a family person or as a person who stood for certain things, and through that process you have been selected. Then the public at large has a chance to look at each candidate from the different parties and compare their talents and their backgrounds, and through that process select one to be its representative at Queen's Park—a process that is time-honoured, because it has been going on for well over 100 years in this province alone, a process that has attracted great people from all parties, willing to give of themselves.

This bill before us now could well restrict that whole democratic process at the very first step, because someone who may be approached by any of our parties may say: "I do not want to have my entire circumstances made public. I am prepared to share them with a commissioner. I am prepared to delineate in detail what my financial situation is, and if my wife or spouse supports it, also hers and that of our children under 18."

A person might well be willing to do that, and to me that does not create a problem, because we do it with our own bankers and our accountants, and there are certain others within our affairs of life who know a lot of our private affairs. But there are people out there who would just love to know what all the assets are of all members in this House, not for the reason that it is going to affect anything we are doing or not doing but just because it would be fun to know; it would be interesting to know. To have that become public knowledge, which will be the case if this bill passes as it is, I see as a tremendous disincentive for people to want to run for public office.

Already people are reluctant to run for public office because of the demands. You have a camera—

Mr. Callahan: They are reluctant to run for your party, but that's not the reason.

Mr. Cousens: I am talking about all parties at this point, and I hope I am not being totally parochial. Certainly, we are all looking for quality candidates and we want people who are going to say, "I am willing to stand for office." But may I suggest to all honourable members, does every person in this House want to have all his assets made public, as they will be under section 12?

This section will call for all "assets, liabilities and financial interests having a value of less than \$1,000" to be made public. "The source of income where the income paid from the source has a value of less than \$1,000 in any 12-month period." That will be made public.

"The amount of income of the member's spouse or minor children or of a private company controlled by the spouse or a minor child where the income is paid from a source other than directly from a ministry or an agency, board or commission of the government." That will be made public.

It will also make public "the municipal address or legal description of real property that is primarily for the residential or recreational use of the member or the member's spouse or minor children."

There happen to be some members in the federal and provincial Houses who do not want people to know where they live because in fact they are being invaded by thieves and people who are taking advantage of their public life and going after them. I am saying that can be a problem. I know of other members, not in this House but in the federal House, who when the public found out where they lived, they have been robbed. This makes it public and says, "Hey, so-and-so lives at this address."

"Personal property used for transportation or for household, educational, recreational, social or aesthetic purposes" will be made public.

"The amount of cash on hand or on deposit with a chartered bank, trust company or other financial institution in Ontario that is lawfully entitled to accept deposits" will be made public.

"The amount of Canada savings bonds and other investments or securities of fixed value issued or guaranteed by any level of government in Canada or an agency of such government" shall be made public. So all our Canada savings bonds, if we have any, or all other investments or securities will be made public.

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"The value of registered retirement savings plans that are not self-administered" will be made public.

"The amount invested in open-ended mutual funds" will be made public.

"The value of guaranteed investment certificates or other similar financial instruments" will be made public.

"The value of annuities and life insurance policies" will be made public.

"The value of pension rights" will be made public.

There will not be any financial secret that any member of this House will have, because once we have filed with the commissioner, it says in subsection 12(5): "The commissioner shall, as soon as is practicable, file the public disclosure statement with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly who shall make it available for examination by the public."

That is an invitation for the Toronto papers and every local paper to start saying: "Here are the affairs of our MPP, and this is what he or she has or has not got. These are their debts. These are their assets." May I say, if we are going to make the financial things public because we are concerned about conflict of interest, let us just think about it: why do we not, as well, follow up on some other things? When I began this discussion I suggested, "What about medical information?"

Mr. Callahan: What about a Gary Hart clause?

Mr. Cousens: What about a Gary Hart clause? I am not trying to be frivolous about it, but the honourable member wants to get to that. I think it is reaching the point with what the press has done to Gary Hart and his own foolhardiness, it is little wonder the public wants to know.

But may I suggest as well that the public deserves the best? It deserves to have people who are willing to give of themselves, their time and their energies to the people and to this province. Are we going to attract anyone who is going to want, once he wins, to have every bit of that information about his private financial life made public? Are we going to attract some of the people who are leaders of industry, whose businesses have prospered, by saying: "Okay, now, everybody is going to know how much you have. Everybody is going to know what your assets are, what has gone into the blind trust. What your assets are, totally, will become not just your own knowledge; it will become everyone's information."

What a disincentive to get people to run for public office. The fact that those of us who are here in this House have come forward in response to a call either from within or from society and said, "We want to serve and we want to do something," is in itself a tribute to the democratic system, that people who are genuinely interested in their neighbours and the wellbeing of their society have said, "Yes, I am willing to give."

How much more does this bill require?

Mr. Breaugh: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: This is a very interesting speech, and the member just went through all the things he thinks

would have to be disclosed. I would just like to point out to the member that those are the matters that would be exempted, so all the things he has just talked about for about the last 20 minutes are matters which would be protected, which would in fact be private and would not be part of the public disclosure document. Before he concludes his argument, I think we might want him to be aware of that.

The Deputy Speaker: I do not really think that is quite a point of order.

Mr. Cousens: I think it is a valid point of order, but it is wrong. It is wrong because the way I read this bill as it stands right now, it leaves it wide open for the public to become totally aware of all financial assets and all financial affairs of each member of this House. If the member is able to read it differently, I suggest to him that subsection 12(5) says:

"The commissioner shall, as soon as is practicable, file the public disclosure statement with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly who shall make it available for examination by the public."

May I suggest that in this whole section it starts opening up that every person who is serving here is going to be totally exposed as to what he owns and what he has? May I suggest further that if that is the case, if the honourable member is absolutely sure about that—and I will check it; I will certainly have more time before the House comes back in again—it leads to other aspects of my concern.

I am concerned very, very much with the need for each member of this House to be treated the same as cabinet ministers, because cabinet ministers have a special trust and a special responsibility in which they themselves have to exert special decision-making processes on what is going on, and they have to be clean. I think we all have to be clean, but they more than any have to make sure they are respecting the sacred trust they are given.

I am concerned that this bill does not include aides to ministers and senior civil servants. Can it not be argued that they too hold positions of influence and are vulnerable to conflict of interest? Why does this bill not cover them as well? Why is there not inclusion of others who could well use their public office, their public trust or the position they have for their own ends? Why are they not included in this bill?

I guess that is why the member for Durham West has suggested that this bill could aptly be named something quite different, something like "An act for the Premier to cop out of conflict-of-

interest enforcement on members of his cabinet.” I believe that it is a cop-out if it does not go to the extent of touching upon other people within this whole area of government who can exert influence in a wrong way.

May I go a step further? The legislation does not outline specifically what would happen to a member of the executive council in the event of a conflict-of-interest finding. What happens to a member of the executive council if there is a problem with a conflict of interest? The commissioner is not even given the power to recommend that a cabinet minister gives up his portfolio.

Fortunately, the media are a strong force within our society, sometimes too strong when you start thinking of the way they drive public opinion. But the media were very instrumental in forcing the Premier to consider and reconsider what he initially called “a technical violation” with regard to one of his members. When he talked about the problems of the former Chairman of Management Board being a technical violation, we now know that it was far more than a technical violation.

In the context of what we are really trying to do here as a Legislature, we want to make sure that all people who are going to be here are going to be properly reviewed and understood. I therefore say that the law, as it is being drafted now, will apply equally to all members of the House. Is it not true that the executive council or cabinet

ministers have special responsibilities for which they should be monitored, and is it not true that others in other positions do not require the same kind of purview?

I see that as a very serious concern. You wonder how far it is going to go because, as it now goes in the United States one of the quality candidates for President, Mario Cuomo, has decided that he will not be submitting his name to run, at least at the present time, because of the kind of exposure that he will have to have in running for that office.

I think we want to continue to attract to this office people who can continue to serve the people in an honourable and honest way but also be able to have some sense of self-respect and some sense of security in the information around them. I have a sense that what we are going to do through this bill is that we are going to start tying people up. We are going to try to limit them. We are going to try to control them in a way that was never intended when people first ran for public office.

We are getting close to the clock and I would like to continue further on this. If possible, I will move adjournment of the debate and then continue at the next opportunity.

On motion by Mr. Cousens, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

APPENDIX A

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

TRIP TO CALIFORNIA

8. Mr. McFadden: Would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology provide the dates of his trip to California in December 1985, a list of all individuals who accompanied him, the itinerary of all activities while there and a detailed cost breakdown of the trip, including the source of payment for each bill? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology did not travel to California in December 1985. He was in California in September 1985. For details of the minister's trip at that time, please refer to his reply to question 247, order paper 88, dated February 6, 1986.

MINISTER'S TRIPS

67. Mr. Brandt: Would the acting Minister of Northern Development and Mines provide an enumeration of all trips taken within Ontario by the former minister, to what locations, with what persons, for what purpose and at what cost, since July 9, 1986? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 110.

TRIP TO CHINA

112. Mr. Brandt: Would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology provide a detailed account of his trip to China between January 10 and 16, 1987, including all individuals in attendance; a cost breakdown of travel expenses, accommodation, food, entertainment; all meetings and attendees; any contracts or agreements entered into by the government; all correspondence between the Ontario and Chinese governments regarding the delegation? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 111.

INTERIM ANSWERS

23 and 69. Mr. McLean: Hon. Mr. Fulton—Additional time is required to obtain and assemble the data from all ministries. Answers should be available on or about August 31, 1987.

APPENDIX B

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(124 members)

Second Session, 33rd Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. L. M. Alexander, PC, QC**Speaker: Hon. H. A. Edighoffer****Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers**

Allen, R. (Hamilton West NDP)
 Andrewes, P. W. (Lincoln PC)
 Ashe, G. L. (Durham West PC)
 Baetz, R. C. (Ottawa West PC)
 Barlow, W. W. (Cambridge PC)
 Bennett, C. F. (Ottawa South PC)
 Bernier, L. (Kenora PC)
 Bossy, M. L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Bryden, M. H. (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Caplan, Hon. E. (Oriole L)
 Charlton, B. A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, D. R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, J. (Downsview L)
 Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
 Cureatz, S. L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
 Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
 Dean, G. H. (Wentworth PC)
Eakins, Hon. J. F., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon. H. A., Speaker (Perth L)
Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
 Epp, H. A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, E. L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Ferraro, R. E. (Wellington South L)
 Fish, S. A. (St. George PC)
 Fontaine, R. (Cochrane North L)
 Foulds, J. F. (Port Arthur NDP)
Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
 Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
 Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
 Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
 Grande, T. (Oakwood NDP)

Grandmaitre, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Ottawa East L)
 Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
 Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
 Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
 Guindon, L. B. (Cornwall PC)
 Haggerty, R. (Erie L)
 Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, C. E. (York East L)
 Hayes, P. (Essex North NDP)
 Henderson, D. J. (Humber L)
 Hennessy, M. (Fort William PC)
 Jackson, C. (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, J. M. (Wellington-Dufferin-Peel PC)
 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
 Knight, D. S. (Halton-Burlington L)
Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Wilson Heights L)
 Lane, J. G. (Algoma-Manitoulin PC)
 Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
 Leluk, N. G. (York West PC)
 Lupusella, A. (Dovercourt L)
 Mackenzie, R. W. (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mancini, R. (Essex South L)
 Marland, M. (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
 McCaffrey, R. B. (Armourdale PC)
 McCague, G. R. (Dufferin-Simcoe PC)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
 McFadden, D. J. (Eglinton PC)
 McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
 McKessock, R. (Grey L)
 McLean, A. K. (Simcoe East PC)
 McNeil, R. K. (Elgin PC)
 Miller, F. S. (Muskoka PC)
 Miller, G. I. (Haldimand-Norfolk L)
 Mitchell, R. C. (Carleton PC)
 Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of Committee of the Whole House (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, K. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)
 Newman, B. (Windsor-Walkerville L)
Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Oakville PC)
 Offer, S. (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)
 Partington, P. (Brock PC)
Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)
 Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)
 Pierce, F. J. (Rainy River PC)
 Poirier, J. (Prescott-Russell L)
 Pollock, J. (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, C. (Yorkview L)
 Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
 Ramsay, D. (Timiskaming L)
 Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, D. R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron-Middlesex L)
 Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
 Runciman, R. W. (Leeds PC)
Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio (Parkdale L)
 Sargent, E. C. (Grey-Bruce L)
Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General (St. David L)
 Sheppard, H. N. (Northumberland PC)
 Shymko, Y. R. (High Park-Swansea PC)
 Smith, D. W. (Lambton L)
 Smith, E. J. (London South L)
Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (York North L)
 South, L. (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Stephenson, B. M. (York Mills PC)
 Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)
 Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)
 Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)
Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Taylor, J. A. (Prince Edward-Lennox PC)
 Timbrell, D. R. (Don Mills PC)
 Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House (Oxford PC)

Turner, J. M. (Peterborough PC)
Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)
 Villeneuve, N. (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
 Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)
 Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)
 Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)
 Wiseman, D. J. (Lanark PC)
Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)
 Yakabuski, P. J. (Renfrew South PC)

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines
 Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet
 Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services
 Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment
 Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General
 Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food
 Eakins, Hon. J. F., Minister of Tourism and Recreation
 Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy
 O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology
 Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services
 Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health
 Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour
 Grandmaître, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs
 Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing
 Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communication
 Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services
 Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations
 Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture
 Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio

Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Bossy, M. L., assistant to the Minister of Housing (Chatham-Kent L)

Cordiano, J., assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Downsview L)

Epp, H. A., assistant to the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue (Waterloo North L)

Ferraro, R. E., assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wellington South L)

Fontaine, R., assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Cochrane North L)

Haggerty, R., assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Erie L)

Hart, C. E., assistant to the Minister of Health (York East L)

Henderson, D. J., assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Humber L)

Knight, D. S., assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet (Halton-Burlington L)

McGuigan, J. F., assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources (Kent-Elgin L)

McKessock, R., assistant to the Solicitor General and the Minister of Correctional Services (Grey L)

Miller, G. I., assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Haldimand-Norfolk L)

Offer, S., assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mississauga North L)

Poirier, J., assistant to the Minister of Energy (Prescott-Russell L)

Polsinelli, C., assistant to the Minister of Labour (Yorkview L)

Ramsay, D., assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Timiskaming L)

Reycraft, D. R., assistant to the Minister of Education (Middlesex L)

Sargent, E. C., assistant to the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Grey-Bruce L)

South, L., assistant to the Minister of the Environment (Frontenac-Addington L)

Ward, C. C., assistant to the Attorney General (Wentworth North L)

STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration of justice: chairman, Mr. Brandt; vice-chairman, Ms. Fish; members, Messrs. Charlton, D. R. Cooke, Ms. Gigantes, Messrs.

O'Connor, Partington, Poirier, Polsinelli, Rowe and Ward; clerk, L. Mellor.

Finance and economic affairs: chairman, Mr. D. R. Cooke; vice-chairman, Mr. Ferraro; members, Messrs. Ashe, Cordiano, Haggerty, Mackenzie, McFadden, Morin-Strom, Ramsay, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Taylor; clerk, F. Carrozza.

General government: chairman, Mr. McCague; vice-chairman, Mr. Guindon; members, Mrs. Grier, Messrs. Lane, Lupusella, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Offer, Pollock, Sheppard and Swart; clerk, D. Deller; clerk pro tem, T. Manikel.

Government agencies: chairman, Mr. Gregory; vice-chairman, Mr. Mitchell; members, Messrs. Fontaine, Foulds, Hayes, J. M. Johnson, Leluk, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. Polsinelli, Sargent and D. W. Smith; clerk, D. Arnott.

Legislative Assembly: chairman, Mr. Breagh; members, Messrs. Bossy, Mancini, Martel, Morin, Newman, Sterling, Treleaven, Turner, Villeneuve and Warner; clerk, S. Forsyth.

Ombudsman: chairman, Mr. McNeil; vice-chairman, Mr. Sheppard; members, Messrs. Bossy, Hayes, Henderson, Hennessy, McLean, Morin, Newman, Philip and Shymko; clerk, T. Decker.

Public accounts: chairman, Mr. Runciman; vice-chairman, Mr. Gillies; members, Messrs. Barlow, Callahan, Cousens, Epp, Gillies, Mancini, Philip, Pope, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Wildman; clerk, D. Arnott.

Regulations and private bills: chairman, Mr. Callahan; vice-chairman, Mr. Haggerty; members, Ms. Bryden, Messrs. Dean, Hennessy, Lupusella, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Pouliot, Shymko and Wiseman; clerk, T. Manikel.

Resources development: chairman, Mr. Laughren; vice-chairman, Mr. Reville; members, Mr. Bernier, Ms. Caplan, Messrs. Gordon, McGuigan, Offer, Pierce, South, Stevenson and Wildman; clerk, T. Decker.

Social development: chairman, Mr. R. F. Johnston; vice-chairman, Mr. Allen; members, Messrs. Andrewes, Baetz, Callahan, Cordiano, Davis, Grande, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Jackson and Reycraft; clerk, F. Carrozza.

SELECT COMMITTEES

Environment: chairman, Mr. Knight; vice-chairman, Mr. G. I. Miller; members, Messrs. Charlton, Eves, Gillies, Mrs. Grier, Mr. Henderson, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. Partington, D. W. Smith and South; clerk, T. Manikel.

Health: chairman, Mr. Callahan; members, Messrs. Andrewes, Baetz, D. S. Cooke, Cordiano, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Henderson, R. F. Johnston, Reycraft, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Turner; clerk, D. Deller; clerk pro tem, T. Manikel.

Retail store hours: chairman, Mr. O'Connor; vice-chairman, Mr. Guindon; members, Messrs.

Barlow, Bernier, Philip, Polsinelli, Reville, Sargent, Shymko, D. W. Smith and Ms. E. J. Smith; clerk, L. Mellor.

*The lists in this appendix, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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Breaugh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
Ferraro, R. E. (Wellington South L)
Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Wilson Heights L)
Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
McFadden, D. J. (Eglinton PC)
McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House and Acting Speaker (Carleton East L)
O'Connor, T. P. (Oakville PC)
Partington, P. (Brock PC)
Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)
Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)
Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Reycraft, D. R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron-Middlesex L)
Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General (St. David L)
Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (York North L)
Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)
Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)
Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)



Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, June 2, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of the speakers taking part.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, June 2, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

Mr. Speaker: Members' statements.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The member for Simcoe East (Mr. McLean).

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: Mr. Speaker, if I could be recognized, please.

Mr. McLean: My statement is for the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway).

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I do not want to interrupt the honourable gentleman, but my colleague the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht) was going to ask for unanimous consent to recognize—

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I rise to ask for unanimous consent in order to pay tribute and recognize a special event that took place in Italy and in order to honour the Italo-Canadian community today.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Mr. Harris: Maybe I could suggest it is news to me. I want to give unanimous consent, and it might be more appropriate if I did that before ministerial statements.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On the point of order, it is news to me that it is news to the honourable member, and on that basis I must apologize. If this has not been properly ordered, then it is a very serious matter and I apologize for it.

Mr. Harris: Could we have unanimous consent right before question period?

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent at the moment?

Mr. Shymko: Before question period.
Agreed to.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. McLean: My statement is for the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway). As the minister is well aware, I originally asked him on October 14, 1986, to provide me with a list of ministers, members and their staff who have been using government-assigned automo-

biles since June 26, 1985. My original notice was served on October 14, 1986. The interim answer was tabled on November 13, 1986.

I was then informed the approximate date the information would be made available was January 15, 1987. A revised interim answer was tabled on January 22. I was then told the approximate date the information would be made available would be in February 1987. I was then told I could expect to receive this information by April 29, 1987.

We are now in the first week of June, approximately eight months after I originally made my request. I have been told that additional time is required to obtain and assemble the data for all government ministries. The latest date I have been given for receiving the list requested last year is now August 31.

The question I originally asked last year was a relatively simple one: How many civil servants and members of the Legislature have cars assigned to them? The people of Ontario have the right to know where their tax dollars are being spent. It is rather odd that the minister cannot seem to get his hands on a list of such major assets as government-assigned automobiles or the names of the ministers, members and civil servants who are using these vehicles. The time has come to answer these questions.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. Philip: It was fairly clear earlier this year that the Liberal government had no idea what to do concerning the issues related to retail store hours, in particular whether there should be Sunday shopping, and if so, to what degree.

Although members of one party had held extensive hearings across the province and prepared a report, the government established yet another group, an all-party select committee, to travel around the province, at considerable expense to the taxpayers, and prepare yet another report. This report, which had the support of members of all three parties on the committee, was tabled on May 21.

We now understand the cabinet is greatly divided on certain recommendations contained in this all-party report. Among the various issues addressed in the report are the designation of

tourist areas and the exemption of small bookstores and art galleries from the Sunday-closing requirement. With reference to the latter, there is a bill before the House which could easily be amended in committee to conform to the committee's report. Unfortunately, the government has refused to call the bill.

The tourist season is upon us, businesses are losing money and, in some cases, businessmen are being harassed as a result of the indecision of the government. It is time for the government to stop sitting on the fence and show leadership in this matter. The issues and recommendations raised by the select committee will not go away until after the election. It is time for the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) to bite the bullet and tell us where they stand on the report and bring forth the legislation.

WEST PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL

Mr. Reycraft: I would like to rise today and voice my great satisfaction at the recent announcement by the Metropolitan Separate School Board and the Toronto Board of Education regarding their leasing agreement to share West Park Secondary School.

As a member of the standing committee on social development who participated in the construction of Bill 30, the extension of separate school funding, I must say this is the essence of the type of local board co-operation we envisioned as we worked long and hard drafting that legislation.

I want to congratulate the members of the joint planning committee for their successful resolution of the negotiation process. I would like to particularly mention Ann Vanstone, chairperson of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, Nola Crewe, chairperson of the Toronto Board of Education, and Caroline DiGiovanni, chairperson of the Metropolitan Separate School Board, for their efforts in this process.

I say to my friends in opposition who were members of the social development committee, especially the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis) and the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), that joint committees do indeed work for the best interests of all students and I do acknowledge their active participation in the development of this subsection of Bill 30.

This is not the first example of local board co-operation in the negotiation and the sharing of facilities. Others include Essex and Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. I think we should all be proud of the efforts of our boards in co-operating

in the implementation of this important piece of legislation for the benefit of all our students.

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BUDGET

Mr. Harris: Today I would like to put on the record some of the basic information in the budget that should have been shared with Ontarians.

Since the Liberals took office, they have increased personal income tax by \$4 billion. That is a \$1,000 increase for every Ontario taxpayer. Other revenues, taxes and user fees are up another \$1,000 or so per taxpayer. There is no chart in the budget showing that the average taxpayer now is paying about \$2,000 more per year in taxes.

Some of this money is from growth in the economy, but where is the chart showing the large portion of it that is from tax increases in the last two budgets? Where is the chart showing that inflation on government spending is up \$3 billion? Well, the Trudeau-style, Peterson-style, Nixon Liberal-style spending is up \$8 billion, a level of \$5 billion over inflation. There is no chart showing the cumulative inflation for their three budgets, up 13 per cent, versus cumulative spending for their three budgets, up 30 per cent.

What there is in the budget is some fast-handed chicanery that improperly shows the deficit going down, but in fact it is going up to \$1.3 billion. There is some more chicanery in the education funding that shows either school board transfers are down or the deficit is up to \$1.6 billion. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) refuses to tell us which.

Surely, the Treasurer should fess up today or resign before it is too late for Ontario ever to recover from the savage attack and damage he is doing to the economy of Ontario.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Allen: It was a great disappointment when the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) could not combine to tackle the over-ceiling spending of school boards, the problem of the disproportion of commitment to education expenditures between the province and the boards and in particular to tackle in some measure the gap between elementary and secondary school grants in the system.

Those grants, if I may refer to the latter, moved from \$476 a decade ago to \$911 this past year. While the government has spoken a great deal—indeed all of us have—about the importance of improving elementary education for a number

of reasons, not least of all to provide a better base for secondary education and to tackle the drop-out rates, and the early primary education review has indicated the importance of that whole period of education for children, the government has not moved or provided the funds to make it possible for boards to move to more adequately confront that issue.

It is, for example, a major scandal that in the elementary schools the rate of textbook spending is far below the national average. There is a major problem, for example, in the expenditures necessary to acquire the computer capacity to give each child computer experience in the classroom and so on.

It is time for the minister and the Treasurer to move to begin to eliminate this gap in our education expenditures.

VICTORIA COLLEGE

Mr. Sheppard: I am very pleased to rise today to announce that the Victoria College site on University Avenue in Cobourg has been sold to a private firm that plans to convert it to a retirement community. I have always maintained that the historic building should again become a functioning part of our community and I am extremely happy that Victoria College will finally be restored and made use of.

There were four responses to the tender call last February for the sale and development of the property. The site has been sold for \$530,000 to a Brockville firm, Wachfree Construction. The Wachfree Construction proposal includes a retirement community of 85 rental units in a mix of bachelor, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units in existing buildings. The balance of the site will accommodate detached and semi-detached homes as well as townhouses designed for seniors. In addition, the former auditorium will be restored as a community centre for the complex. Not only will this project provide very much needed rental accommodation for seniors, but it will also create long-term employment for the community.

Wachfree will begin engineering studies immediately and primary work on the project will start once the transaction is finalized.

NURSING HOMES

Mr. Warner: I think there is a new accord afoot here. Accords are really popular these days. It is between the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) and the Liberal Party. This is a really strange one. I sent away for a booklet about nursing homes in Ontario. I

received back a booklet from the government two days ago. It has "Minister of Health, Larry Grossman" on the back of it, which tells me this government has done absolutely nothing about nursing homes in Ontario since the present Leader of the Opposition was the minister.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to announce today that I have appointed a 14-member Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection, which is holding its first meeting today.

Last summer, the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations began a review of all existing consumer protection legislation. This review encompasses 20 pieces of legislation and a number of consumer issues, such as warranties, contracts, dispute resolution and complaint remedies. Since we will soon be drafting legislation, I have appointed this committee to review the work done so far and to continue to work with us.

The 14 representatives of consumer, business and other interest groups will be advising me on the changes that are needed to bring our consumer protection laws up to date.

As all members are aware, the world of the consumer is changing dramatically. Much of the existing legislation is a generation out of date and was haphazardly developed. We have seen vulnerable consumers left unprotected in the marketplace and we are seeing new services, technologies and other trends reshape our marketplace.

Our goal is comprehensive and concise legislation which will also give us the flexibility to respond to problems as they emerge during this century and well into the next.

The consumer legislative review project is aimed at developing a simplified yet comprehensive approach to consumer protection. Basic consumer protection and fair business practice measures will be included in one piece of legislation accompanied by separate laws dealing with specific industries.

The advisory committee will be overseeing the proposals of the legislative review project to ensure that they are comprehensive yet responsive to a broad range of perspectives and interests. The advisory committee will advise the ministry project team and myself as its work progresses.

The members of the advisory committee are: Judith Andrew, Canadian Federation of Independent Business; Barbara Beck, Consumers' Asso-

ciation of Canada; Edward Belobaba, professor of consumer and commercial law at Osgoode Hall law school and a practising lawyer; Havi Echenberg, National Anti-Poverty Organization; Julien Guernon, Canadian Council of Better Business Bureaus; Joyce King, United Senior Citizens of Ontario; Marianne King-Wilson, Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals; Linda Lalonde, Ontario Association of Legal Clinics; Jean Lane-Davis, Association of Community Information Centres in Ontario; Serge Plouffe, Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario; Denis Sexton, Ontario Federation of Labour; Judge Pamela Thomson, provincial court (civil division); Richard Vosburgh, professor of consumer studies, University of Guelph; and Barnard Wilson, Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

This consumer legislative review project is working to build a marketplace where fairness is assured to all consumers and where honest business people prosper. The advisory committee's broad representation will serve us well in reaching this goal.

It is an ambitious project but one we want to accomplish to meet our responsibilities to Ontario's consumers.

SENIOR CITIZENS MONTH

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: It is a pleasure for me to announce that once again, June has been proclaimed Senior Citizens Month in Ontario, a time to honour the role of seniors in our society, to celebrate their achievements and to encourage their continuing active involvement in the life of our province.

This year's Senior Citizens Month theme, "Ageing is a lifelong affair," recognizes that ageing is an ongoing process, an accumulation of knowledge and experiences. We do not suddenly become old at 65; many of the plans, hopes and aspirations that are common during our youth remain with us throughout life.

The focus of the province's tribute to seniors will be the presentation of the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 1987, in the main foyer of the Legislative Building.

The purpose of these awards is to recognize some of the outstanding contributions individual senior citizens have made to our communities and to the quality of life in Ontario.

1350

In April, requests for nominations were forwarded to senior citizens and community organizations and were made available to the

public at large upon request. The external nomination process conducted this year resulted in well over 400 individual seniors being nominated.

It was a most difficult task for the selection committee to choose the most outstanding individuals from those who were nominated. However, with the assistance of Mrs. Ivy St. Lawrence, chairman of the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens, and two of our colleagues, the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), representing the Conservative caucus, and the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner), representing the New Democratic Party caucus, 21 recipients of this year's award have been chosen.

I am pleased to announce these winners today. They are: Rev. Joseph Brown, Toronto; Paul Emile Boileau, Sturgeon Falls; Mrs. Maude Cochrane, Deseronto; Mrs. Mary Dwyer, Wawa; Miss Margaret Griffiths, Ottawa; Mrs. Mabel Harvey, Kenora; Art Hill, Deseronto; Dr. Arnold Iscove, Toronto; Mrs. Dortha Knights, Windsor; Mrs. Anita Lapointe, Port Colborne; Mrs. Mrytle MacLeod, Kirkland Lake; Mrs. Thora Mills, Toronto; J. D. Mohan, Brampton; Grant Palmer, Peterborough; Ernest and Dulcie Pink, St. Catharines; Gus Ryder, Toronto; W. Bev Shouldice, Shallow Lake; James Spark, Guelph; Mrs. Lucy Turnbull, Mississauga; and Herb Wittich, Waterloo.

Each of this year's recipients has continued in his or her own unique way to contribute his or her skills and talents to society. Through honouring these individuals with the 1987 Ontario Senior Achievement Award, the government of Ontario expresses its appreciation to those people who have continued to use their talents and energies for the benefit of their communities and for society as a whole.

I hope all members will join me in this tribute to Ontario's seniors by recognizing the many contributions seniors make to the quality of life in their area and by celebrating this very special month at local events in their own communities.

I want to invite all members of this House to attend the presentation of the awards on June 23, 1987, at 6 p.m. in the main foyer of the Legislative Building, and also to wear one of these buttons remembering the occasion of this month as Senior Citizens Month.

RESPONSES

SENIOR CITIZENS MONTH

Mrs. Marland: It is a pleasure for me to join in the recognition of the seniors of our province

today. I must say that there is some humour in the statement by the minister, that being that perhaps for the first time in the history of this Legislature, the members will now know there is a legitimate lifelong affair, that of ageing.

The other statement refers to the fact that ageing is an ongoing process, and I think that will be a great benefit for people who have not known what the biologists, the scientists and the pre-dinner beverage manufacturers have known for some time.

I must say it was indeed a pleasure for me, on behalf of our caucus, to sit on the committee, because if all members had the opportunity we had to look through in excess of 400 nominations, they would be able to appreciate at first hand just how rich our province is in terms of the work, dedication and commitment of the senior citizens of Ontario. It would give all members a great deal of pride to know personally of people outside their immediate ridings and their involvement and tremendous dedication.

In particular today, I am of course very proud of the fact that one of the recipients is a lady in Mississauga, Lucy Turnbull, who is 84 years of age. In her case, she would perhaps be best described as the founder of senior citizens' organizations and programs within the city of Mississauga. She has in excess of a 20-year involvement.

In recognizing her, it is only because she is the only one I know personally. All these recipients are equally as tremendous in their contribution and in their work, and I think the recognition of our seniors through this program of the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards is one in which we should all take pride, joy and gratitude.

Mr. Cousens: We have more words from the minister. I believe every day is seniors' day. Certainly, the background of our province has been built by those people. When we start looking at the grey hair and the age of some of us, we realize we have a vested interest in being interested in seniors. The fact is that many of us should be far more involved in the work of seniors.

In compliment to our own leader, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman), and to the people of our party, we have had a task force going for the last year on care for the elderly, on human and social issues in the province. We have just come out with a new paper on seniors, "Senior Wise," a report on services for seniors. The government is sitting over there doing a lot of talking, but as far as real action is concerned it is not doing any. They talk

about putting their money where their mouth is, but they are not doing it. When we look at the home care and home support services which should be significantly expanded, we do not see the dollars going into those services.

The fact of the matter is that our seniors are getting words. What they really want from this government is action. I have to say the government will stand judged for its lack of action for seniors. The seniors are not fools. When this government starts saying it will do something for them, it should do it, not just put the words out there. The dollars are not going out in the budget. It is time the government started to do something instead of just saying nice things.

Mr. Andrewes: The minister has now discovered that ageing is an ongoing process, something that was discovered many years ago, almost centuries ago, by scientists, by psychologists, by biologists and by those who manufacture pre-dinner refreshments. What this minister needs to do now is to say that when it comes to caring for elderly people in Ontario, we will treat them all the same. We will provide the same level of service under one statute called an extended services act. When the minister brings in that kind of an announcement, we will thank him and congratulate him.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Swart: I would like to respond to the statement of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter). First, I would like to say that if consumer protection was based on the number of committees and the number of committee members that any government had, it should have the greatest consumer protection in this nation, especially when it has a bunch of committees sitting around this province dealing with 20 different pieces of legislation.

Now they have 14 more members, and many of those members are very competent people. I would like to think it was real, but I know from experience in the two years this government has been there that it is not.

For instance, the minister says in this report, "We have seen vulnerable consumers left unprotected in the marketplace." That is no understatement, by any means. What has the minister done with regard to natural gas prices when hearings have been held? He has left them loaded against the consumers. What has he done with gasoline prices in the north, even after his government made a promise? What has he done with the Ontario Hydro hearings to protect the consum-

ers? What has he done with insurance rates over the last two years? Nothing; absolutely nothing.

1400

It is true that in this nation we need real consumer protection. It is true that we have the highest concentration of corporations of any democracy in the world and we have the poorest competition legislation of any democracy in the world. The best the minister has been able to do so far, as the Conservatives did before him, was to form what they call self-policing agencies. They do not work.

If the minister was really sincere about consumer protection when he divided the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, instead of separating out financial institutions and leaving consumer and commercial relations together he would have had a full ministry of consumer protection and put the rest of the commercial enterprise in with the other ministry.

If he is really sincere about this, he would appoint a public advocate on behalf of the consumers, as they have done in the United States, to fight for them on every issue. Simply, what he has done today is just another measure of election posturing, like he has done on the insurance issue.

Mr. Speaker: Any further responses? The member for Welland-Thorold—I am sorry, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr. Warner: No one forgets the member for Welland-Thorold.

SENIOR CITIZENS MONTH

Mr. Warner: I am pleased to respond on behalf of my party in offering congratulations to the recipients of the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards this year. I am very pleased that these individuals will be honoured.

I am sure the recipients themselves, along with our party, might also wish to deliver a message to this government that platitudes are not enough. It is one thing to honour recipients of awards each year. That is important and we appreciate it, but it is not enough.

A full year ago, this assembly unanimously passed the Seniors' Independence Act. The government has managed to stall that legislation, as it has stalled any form of revamping our system. If this government truly believes that community-based care is important and that it is important to give seniors the opportunity to remain in their own homes, then it should do something about it and not simply talk about it.

For example, in the last budget, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) had the opportunity to ensure that

the property tax credit would accurately reflect the approximate amount of the education tax, and he failed to do so. This government has not addressed, in a serious way, trying to come up with decent wages for the community care workers. In that measure alone, the message is still that the institutions and the institutional approach are more important than community-based care. We categorically reject that.

Finally, it is with some amusement that I listen to the Conservatives as they do a little jumping up and down when reminded that they received approximately \$90,000 a year from nursing home operators. That is perhaps what blocked any real reform to nursing home care in this province.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I rise to ask unanimous consent of the House to mark a special event which is of great significance to the Italian community.

Mr. Speaker: Unanimous consent has been given.

ITALIAN NATIONAL REPUBLIC DAY

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: On behalf of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the government of Ontario, I rise for the purpose of recognizing an important event that took place on this day 41 years ago, June 2, 1946, the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Italy.

To celebrate this day, I am honoured to recognize in the gallery representatives of the Italian government and leaders of the Italian-Canadian community, Dr. Massimo Machia, the Consul General of Italy; Dr. Gregory Grande, the president of the National Congress of Italian Canadians, Toronto district; Manlio d'Ambrosio, the president of the Ontario region of the national congress; Angelo Delfino, first vice-president of the national congress; and other distinguished leaders.

[Remarks in Italian]

That day, June 2, 1946, is of great significance and sentimental value to our citizens of Italian heritage and to the people of Italy, a country not only of monumental buildings, famous explorers and noted scientists, but also a trusted friend and ally, a loyal trading partner and a committed supporter of democratic and civil rights around the world.

We recognize the valuable contribution Italo-Canadians have made to the cultural and economic development of Ontario and Canada. Our province has become enriched because our Italian friends, on coming here, have brought with them their love of art, music, architecture

and education. More than that, they have strengthened the pillars of our multicultural society by adding their traditional respect for hard work and family life.

We have benefited greatly from their participation in sports, business, the professions and, more recently, government and law. Therefore, I invite the members of this House to join me in congratulating the worldwide Italian community on this very special day. Thank you very much.

Mr. Shymko: I join the Minister without Portfolio responsible for citizenship and culture in the remarks that he has made in this House on this very special occasion. I want to point out that it is on occasions such as this that we normally and sometimes will make some remarks in a nonofficial language, the language of many communities in this great province of ours and in Canada. I also have a speech prepared and some remarks in Italian, which I will not deliver, unfortunately, because of a Speaker's ruling of May 25, where the language of Dante Alighieri is deemed not deserving of translation into the official language of English.

I would appreciate that maybe some time in the future we may review the standing orders which in the past have allowed us to address the House in various languages, so that this be reviewed. If it means providing more money for Hansard, I think it should be provided.

I welcome Greg Grande, the Toronto president of the National Congress of Italian Canadians; Manlio d'Ambrosio, the president of the Ontario region; Angelo Delfino, the national vice-president; the consul general and all the members of the delegation representing various organizations federated with the National Congress of Italian Canadians.

I would like to point out that it is on occasions such as these that we also point out the vast contribution of Canadians of Italian origin to the prosperity of our country. I would like to bring to the attention of the honourable members that perhaps there could be a three-party agreement some time in the very near future to give consideration to the passage of a resolution under item 12 in Orders and Notices which would recognize the Italian community's immeasurable contribution, as I have said, to the development, growth and prosperity of Ontario in a very symbolic and concrete way by allowing for the erection of a statue of Giovanni Caboto, whose 500th anniversary will be celebrated very soon, on the grounds of the parliament of Ontario as recognition of the fact that Canada is a land of immigrants that we respect and will continue to

be one for centuries to come, as it began with the discovery by someone who represents the best of civilization and the contribution of the Italian nation.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity of addressing these few words and I hope that on June 24, when we celebrate the anniversary of 490 years of the landing of Giovanni Caboto, this resolution will be given some consideration.

1410

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I do not recall the exact words that the honourable member used, but my understanding was that he indicated the Italian language was unworthy of being reproduced in our Hansard. I would say to the member for High Park-Swansea that his comments are totally unworthy and that no member of this House except perhaps the honourable member would ever say such a thing.

Mr. Brandt: That isn't what he said at all. You know that as well as I do. You're taking a cheap shot.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not know if that was a point of order or not.

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order—is it the same point?

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, you ruled that was not a point of order, so I assumed I had to—

Mr. Speaker: No, I asked him if he was standing on a point of order.

Mr. Harris: I will stand on a point of privilege then and try it that way, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if you think the term "dipstick" is parliamentary and if not, would you ask the Treasurer to withdraw it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Without being asked, I certainly withdraw my view that the honourable member is a dipstick.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There appears to be an unnecessary discussion.

Mr. Rae: I do not know whether there is an Italian translation for that, but I am sure we will find one.

Mr. Cordiano: Try it.

Mr. Rae: I will in a moment. First of all, I want to say that any political system in which the leader of the third party becomes Prime Minister is one that has much to commend it and certainly would win support on this side of the House—

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: —to say nothing of President Pertini. But let me say in a serious moment that when we celebrate this particular day we are of course celebrating not only the 40th anniversary of the declaration of the Italian republic but also—and I think I can speak for a great many citizens of this province—the extraordinary contribution the Italian community has made to the life of our great country.

I can honestly say my own life and my own party have been completely enriched by the presence of the Italian community in our midst. It would be impossible for us to think of Ontario and Toronto, and indeed Canada, without also thinking of the enormous contribution Italian men and women have made to the quality of life in our country and in our family.

I want to say how very delighted I am to be able to say a few words in a language that perhaps one day can be translated in Hansard but which I know will be understood by all those who have an Italian heart, which I hope is the vast majority of us here.

[Remarks in Italian]

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. I wonder if the minister could tell us by what number Quebec's share of total Canadian immigration would have to be increased to honour the guarantees the Premier (Mr. Peterson) agreed to in the Meech Lake accord?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I think it is quite inappropriate for me to speak up on the occasion on which the Premier is taking part in the Meech Lake accord debates. I can tell the honourable member I have had very good discussions with the Minister of State for Immigration, however, and would prefer to wait until the Premier comes back to answer that question.

Mr. Grossman: I did not go so far as to ask the minister actually to have an opinion, heaven forbid, on the accord or its impact on the multicultural community which she is supposed to serve. I am only asking her for the basic information flowing out of the Meech Lake accord, as already signed by her Premier a couple of weeks ago.

My question to the minister, whose responsibility it is to oversee multiculturalism and citizenship and to ensure there is an ability for

families to reunite, is by how many people Quebec's share of total Canadian immigration would have to increase in order to honour the guarantee her Premier has already agreed to. How many people?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I am sorry I cannot give the member that accurate information, but if he is worrying about whether I have any opinions, God forbid, I can tell him I do.

Mr. Grossman: Well then, we will wonder about the impact those opinions might have.

Yesterday in this House we offered the figure. Had the minister even been kind enough or interested enough to follow up on the questions we raised yesterday in this House, she would know that the impact of the Meech Lake accord would mean that 8,000 persons who were allowed to immigrate into Canada, outside of Quebec, would not be allowed to do that under the Meech Lake accord and therefore would have to be sent to and required to live in Quebec.

Given that fact, my question to the minister is this: how can she defend the interests of, say, the Chinese and Portuguese communities, to name just two, and the Italian community, whose representatives have just left the chamber, acknowledging the fact that the Meech Lake accord will have the impact of denying the opportunity for perhaps as many as 8,000 of their relatives to reunite in Ontario and force them instead to go to Quebec? How can she justify her position and her government's position defending multiculturalism when that will be one of the impacts of the Meech Lake accord?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I think the honourable member knows that the Premier has answered those questions, and I think his answers are accurate.

Mr. Grossman: He certainly has not.

Hon. Ms. Munro: All right then; that is all the information he feels he is allowed to divulge to the member at this moment.

Mr. Grossman: He did not even know the information.

Hon. Ms. Munro: Listen, if the member wants an answer, I will give it to him. As far as I am concerned, when Quebec enters into those kinds of special requests, it does not stop any immigrant from having any of his rights and being transferred to other provinces or from wanting to access other provinces.

Interjections.

Hon. Ms. Munro: I do not know what else he means in terms of equal rights to other multicult-

tural groups. Maybe he would like to continue that question.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Pope: Since the Premier (Mr. Peterson), on matters governing the conduct of his cabinet and his ministers and matters of ethics, has again refused to accept any responsibility for the conduct of his ministers, refused to set standards and refused to indicate any kind of knowledge on his part—

Mr. Speaker: Which minister are you asking?

Mr. Pope: —when some of these difficult matters come to pass, I have a question for the Minister of Health concerning the details of his fund-raiser scheduled for June 15.

There are a number of issues that arise from this whole matter, such as: who prepared the invitations and who sent them out; where were they sent from and by whom; how many people in the health care field were invited; and where did the mailing list come from? I think the members of this chamber and the people of Ontario are entitled to an explanation. Can the minister give an explanation for this?

1420

Hon. Mr. Elston: With respect to the fund-raiser, which is indeed being held on June 15, the actual list of names of people who have been invited is not known to me. I did not participate in selecting them. However, they were prepared by people who work in my office and by people who are in my constituency. More people, who wish to be invited, have contacted my office requesting extra invitations and we are mailing them out. I have looked at where those things were prepared. They were prepared by people who work with me in my constituency and in my Toronto office. They were mailed out to a lot of people around Ontario.

Mr. Pope: It is clear that we now have a Premier with no knowledge of this matter and a minister, in whose name the invitations were sent, with no knowledge of this matter. That is the strategy of the Liberal government of the day. No one knows anything about it, but it was done. That is the responsibility of the Premier and this cabinet on this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Supplementary.

Mr. Pope: The minister spent \$30,000 in his election campaign. He has \$11,000 in his own constituency funds. He is entitled to over \$8,000 in public subsidies already. When he needs at the most \$20,000 for the next election campaign, if it were called today, why did he set a target of

\$200,000 if it is only for his use? Why did he set a target of \$200,000 for fund-raising for his own riding association if it was not part of a Liberal scheme?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The role of the member, in addition to being a member of the cabinet, is to work on behalf of the party for the re-election of his colleagues and himself. I can tell the honourable gentleman that in terms of preparing for another election, which is probably going to come soon, finances are needed throughout the party structure and throughout my constituency to ensure that an adequate election campaign is run. It is part of the system.

I take my responsibilities as a cabinet member, as a member of this party and as a member of the political system as being to do what is required to gain re-election for a party that has shown it can provide progressive reform for the people of this province. I will wish to maintain that position and we will wish to continue to ensure that more reform is provided for our system in Ontario.

Mr. Pope: Now we have a clear view of the Liberal concept of open government. First, they had the Liberal Economic Advisory Forum, which sold access to the Premier for \$1,000. They had the then Chairman of Management Board selling access for \$250 a person for a breakfast. They had the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) inviting lawyers in the Ottawa region to have a glass of wine with him for \$200. Now we have the Minister of Health sending invitations to those involved in the health care field for \$200.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. Pope: We now know that publicly paid employees of his ministry were involved. We now have the Queen's Park frank on invitations being sent out. We have invitations on government letterhead, not Ontario Liberal letterhead. We have references to the Minister of Health as sending the invitation; MPP and nothing else in there about his riding association. When are they, as Liberals, going to clean up their act?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman has pointed out several pieces of information that I am sure he would like the public to have clarification on. That is not, of course, government letterhead. He knows that as well as I do. People use the crest of Ontario for a number of their mailings. The member knows that is true and the people of Ontario know it is true.

People would also like to know, when the member talks about the invitations having been franked, that I did discover that had occurred and that the very day it happened I reimbursed the

people for the error that had been made. I take great exception to the implication that is being left by that gentleman that there is something improper with respect to fund-raising. This particular man has put aside for these purposes a very big amount of money to do stuff like running for leadership of his own party.

I am not running for leadership of my party. We have the best leader in this House. We have a leader who needs to be retained in Ontario to provide the very strong and very reform-minded policies which are moving this province well ahead of any other jurisdictions in this country. I will match this party against those other two parties at any time, but I am going to be prepared to do that on the basis of a very sound program and policies which we can put in front of the people of this province.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. The minister may be aware that on May 13 a young man by the name of Anthony Medeiros was working on a demolition site at 700 Lawrence Avenue here in Toronto. He was apparently told by the company to strip completely the walls of a particular part of the site.

He had removed a number of electrical wiring boxes; when he removed the last one, he discovered the power had not been cut. He received a shock of about 600 volts to 700 volts which threw him to the floor. Our information is that those around him, including his foreman, did not know how to turn off the electrical unit and that there was a delay of somewhere between 15 and 20 minutes before emergency arrived. The other workers were unable to disconnect the wiring that Mr. Medeiros was holding, and Mr. Medeiros died.

My question to the minister is this. This is, alas, not an exceptional event in Toronto today. We know of another instance where a worker magically survived a shock of 27,000 volts because he was sitting in a forklift truck. I wonder if the minister can explain how this is happening today in Toronto and precisely what kind of prosecutorial action his ministry is taking with respect to this particular accident.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I would have to check into the specifics of the point our investigation is at. I am not familiar offhand. There are a great number of these incidents and I can remember most of them, but quite candidly I say to the

member, while it is vaguely familiar to me, I am not aware of the specifics.

I do not have any report for him, other than that the matter is under investigation, but I would expect that out of this case there would be an inquest called into this fatality and arising out of that inquest, once that inquest was completed, a determination would be made by the ministry. There would be recommendations as to whether to prosecute, which would begin with the construction health and safety branch and eventually would find their way to the legal services branch and would indeed be reviewed by senior officials up to and including the Deputy Minister of Labour.

That is the normal course of events whenever there is a fatality. Those matters go through that kind of very serious and senior scrutiny even if the recommendation is against prosecution. I can say to the honourable member that certainly any fatality is a very tragic case, and very clearly we have to do more. We have to do better than we have done before in terms of ensuring that the kind of training that might have prevented this tragedy, and indeed would have prevented this tragedy, is the kind of training given to each and every worker.

I can assure the House and the honourable member that if prosecution in this case or any other is warranted, that prosecution will be undertaken without any qualms at all.

1430

Mr. Rae: It is interesting that the minister would describe a normal course of events which only yesterday his colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) said was not going to be what was going to take place in Sudbury with respect to Joe Kuhle. We seem to have a clear double standard here when it comes to prosecutions and a clear double standard in terms of justice for ordinary workers in this province.

I am surprised the minister would not be better informed about this accident for the simple reason that on May 22, 1987, he received a letter from the secretary-treasurer of Local 506 of the Labourers' International Union of North America, Mr. Barbieri, who says:

"Representing 300 demolition workers, we are concerned with the number of accidents occurring within the industry. The basis of our concern is the apparent lack of safety regard coupled with a high number of serious accidents. We are also unsatisfied with the infrequent safety inspections of job sites." He goes on to say: "More recently, we are appalled at the bizarre and unfortunate death of Mr. Medeiros, an employee in this

industry working at a demolition site at 700 Lawrence Avenue, Toronto."

If this letter was sent out on May 22, can the minister explain why he is so blissfully and abysmally ignorant of this situation when I ask him today, some 10 days after the letter was sent?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: First, I get just a little tired at the suggestions which emanate from over there that somehow over on this side there is a double standard and the suggestion is left that there is some responsibility over here, whether it is with me or with my colleague the Attorney General, for some so-called double standard. I would have expected from the leader of third party, who is himself a lawyer, some greater degree of understanding of the differences and the intricacies of the criminal justice system than I have heard in the last couple of days. I really would have expected that.

I can say to the honourable gentleman that the letter has not been brought to my attention. Undoubtedly it will be. I regret that yesterday, as the honourable member knows, I left question period a little early and returned home. It may well now be sitting on my desk but I did not get to it last night. I will get to all of the mail that is on my desk but undoubtedly, if the letter has been received, it has already been sent out to two senior officials for their review, and not only will I expect to be able to see the letter tonight but a preliminary observation from my senior officials. So action has been ongoing ever since the letter was received.

Mr. Rae: I do not really care whether the minister is tired of something or not. It is the workers who are getting killed, not the minister, and it is time he started to recognize that he has a problem on his hands and he is not on top of it.

What I want to know is why, as soon as he heard about that particular incident, the minister did not demand an immediate report with respect not only to this accident but to the other accidents that are taking place on demolition sites and make sure that every step was taken and that every step will be taken? Does the minister know whether the same practice is going on today? Does he know whether the workers are informed? Does he know whether the company is doing anything? He does not know anything about it. He is just gets up and says he is tired because people are asking him questions he does not want to answer. That is his problem.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: That is exactly what the senior officials of the ministry will be asking and demanding, not only from the inspector but also from the manager of the region, from the head of

the construction health and safety branch and indeed from the executive director of the division. This government, through the generosity of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), has placed more resources at my disposal than we have ever had before. We are hiring—

Mr. Rae: You have fewer construction inspectors than you had in 1981.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Pipe down for a minute.

Frankly, the ridiculous lectures from over on that side of the House really get a little tiring after a while. We are making every effort to reduce the number of injuries and to eliminate the fatalities in the work place. There is nothing about a fatality or indeed about any kind of an injury that makes me or any member on this side of the House happy. We have taken as much action as we can and will take more to attempt to eliminate that problem. I rather resent the suggestion we are not doing our job.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Can the minister confirm that the following facts are true: that by the end of this year there will still be a \$286-a-month difference between the income of a disabled person living at home with family and an elderly person living at home with family in this province, and that in fact the annual income of that disabled person this year will be \$5,328—one half of the 1986 poverty line?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The honourable member will know that the amount of money that is made available to disabled people depends upon their needs. Obviously, those living at home have fewer needs than those living out in subsidized housing or the private market. There is a range of pension ceilings. I cannot confirm the exact figure, but the member is very close to the right answer.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am trying to point out that we deal with disabled people very differently than we deal with the elderly, whom we do not treat in that discriminatory fashion.

Can the minister confirm that by the end of this year he will have closed the gap between the disabled person and the elderly person by only \$22, given the fact that there is indexing of the seniors' incomes and that the total cost to the provincial Treasury will be only \$10.5 million this year when we have this huge surplus? Can the minister tell me what he will say to people like Gino and Susan Adamo, who are living on \$419 a month at this point, or Jean Newson, who is in subsidized housing living on \$458 a month?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The recent announcement by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) that all disabled people in the province would get an additional \$50 a month would indicate that, in fact, it would be more than what the member suggested.

I would also point out to him that there are other services available to disabled people that are not available to the elderly and that has to be factored into the question as well. The member knows that vocational rehabilitation services are available. The member knows that the disabled person is able to earn income that is not deducted from his pension, which is not the case with the elderly. He has to take the total package into consideration.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The minister also knows that the elderly get a property tax break and other breaks that the disabled do not get, if he wants to compare lists.

Does he not think it is maybe even counter to the Charter of Rights that a permanently disabled person who is 64 years of age this June will receive \$419 a month, and when he turns 65 this July he will be eligible for \$740?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member should also keep in mind that the eligibility for seniors is part of the federal program. It is not just the provincial program. The member will be aware of the fact that once a person turns 65, in the provincial program for seniors the additional benefits are available only to those who cannot qualify for the federal programs. He is talking on two different bases.

Mr. Speaker: New question. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Grossman: The fact is this minister funded that with the cheques taken out of the pockets of 13,000 other disabled people in the province. What he did is a disgrace.

Mr. Speaker: Order. You have a question to which minister?

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Culture, once again.

How does the minister feel about the Meech Lake accord, which will end up, as one reads the document, in having the province of Quebec go out and find immigrants in countries that will be more compatible with the environment in Quebec and thus mean that fewer people will be invited or allowed to come to Canada from Italy, China, Hong Kong and Portugal?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I do not read the implications the way the Leader of the Opposition does. In fact, various people who decide to immigrate, or for whom Quebec reaches out, come to Quebec and are welcome to stay there but are also welcome to transfer to other provinces.

The member will know that Quebec has already entered into different kinds of policy arrangements with the federal government, so I think to compare that with the implications of the Meech Lake accord is quite inaccurate at this point.

Mr. Grossman: The minister does not know what she is talking about.

1440

Hon. Ms. Munro: The member does not understand that? No? That is unfortunate. Maybe I should just sit down.

Finally, I would like to impress on the member that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and other Premiers are entering into confidential discussions today. It would be quite inappropriate for me to comment any further on that question.

Mr. Grossman: In part because of the signature of one of the architects of the accord, the Premier of Ontario, there is no question but that family reunification in the Portuguese, Italian and Chinese communities is going to be inhibited on the basis of the admitted accord provisions signed by the member's Premier.

Mr. Cordiano: Oh, come on. There is nothing there that was not there before.

Mr. Grossman: The member for Downsview (Mr. Cordiano) should go and explain to the Italian community where those 8,000 immigrants are going to come from. Why does the member not do his job for once and stand up to his Premier on behalf of his constituents?

My question to the minister is this. Given that Quebec, under this agreement, will be given the opportunity to go out and locate immigrants more compatible to Quebec's environment than to that of Ontario and the rest of the country, is she going to contemplate entering into a similar arrangement with the federal government, as the Meech Lake accord allows her to do, to ensure that Ontario maintains its current level of immigration into Ontario? Is she going to do that to protect the immigrants here?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I would like to repeat myself on three things. Right now Quebec has already entered into different kinds of policy arrangements with the federal government on issues of immigration policy and procedures. Second, the question of reunification is being

addressed in the current legislation of the federal government before the House now, and this government has already advised and is taking issue with certain of those considerations. Third, I will say to the member again—

Mr. Grossman: You have cut off thousands of families.

Hon. Ms. Munro: Does he want the answer? The Premiers, in consultation with the Prime Minister of the country, are looking at the Meech Lake accord as a way in which constitutional rights can be accorded to Quebec in a way in which we, as provinces, can look more sensitively at the whole question of immigration and refugee determination.

Mr. Grossman: They give away 8,000 immigrants a year. Wave them goodbye.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition has asked his question.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. McClellan: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. I have here a copy of a decision of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. It is decision 12, dated October 3, 1986. It involves a 50-year old Italian-Canadian woman who worked as a cashier in a grocery store. The tribunal ruled as follows: "The appeal is allowed. The WCB is directed to recognize the worker's disability and assess the worker for a permanent disability award to be made retroactive."

Can the minister explain to us why the Workers' Compensation Board has indicated that because it does not like this decision and because it does not agree with the decision of the tribunal, it has held up the payment of this award for eight months now?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable member will understand that I do not have that information immediately at hand. I was not aware that the WCB had held up that decision. I will look into the matter immediately and report back to him.

Mr. McClellan: Yesterday, I raised the case of decision 72 involving the definition of "injury by accident," which the Workers' Compensation Board does not like either and which it now is planning to try to overturn by means of its own kangaroo court that I believe starts tomorrow.

Is the minister going to continue to sit by and do nothing while the Workers' Compensation Board systematically tries to destroy the integrity and independence of the appeals tribunal? Is he going to take action? If so, what action is he

going to take to protect the tribunal and to prevent the Workers' Compensation Board from destroying it?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Let us separate the two issues. The matter of an appeal—

Mr. McClellan: They are exactly the same issue.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The honourable gentleman suggests they are the same. With respect, they are not. For members who do not know, on decision 72 the independent board has chosen to review that matter and has voted to do so. That review will begin on Thursday and continue on Friday of this week. That is entirely within the rights of the board as contemplated by this Legislature in the passage of section 86n of the Workers' Compensation Act.

In terms of decision 12, the honourable member raises what I consider and what I take to be a very serious question. He has raised with me and with this House the question of an apparent decision ordering the board to assess an injured worker for a permanent partial disability and, according to the honourable gentleman, action has not been taken for more than eight months. I am going to look into that matter on a most urgent basis because, as far as I know, while that decision was considered to be a fairly controversial one, and I remember it by number as a very controversial one, there has been no decision by the board of directors of the WCB to review that decision in any way. On the face of it, it seems to me they should be getting on with doing exactly what the tribunal asked them to do several months ago.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Pope: My question is back to the Minister of Health with respect to his fund-raising activities that are being arranged by publicly paid staff, using the franking privileges of Queen's Park and using government logos on the invitation.

In the light of the minister's earlier answers, I would like him to explain how this invitation, which I have in my hand, was sent to Bernard Reynolds, chairman of the board of Huntsville District Memorial Hospital, unless it was taken from a Ministry of Health list?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not know to whom that letter was sent. I do not know the names of all the people who received letters. I will check into it, if the member wishes to send it over, and I can find out how the letter was sent out.

At this stage, I wish to say I already commented on the question of the franking. I did

find out about that and reimbursed the public. That was not appropriate and, in fact, I reimbursed the people when I found out the franking had been done.

Mr. Pope: It is clear that the Liberals have looted the mailing lists of every ministry in this government and are using them for partisan purposes. They are abusing government privileges. They are using government logos. They are using government franking privileges. They are using publicly paid government staff.

Just to help the minister with his explanation, Bernard Reynolds is not only chairman of the board of Huntsville hospital, for 15 years he has been the chief financial officer for the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller). There is no way he was on a Liberal list. Now we want an explanation as to what the minister is doing.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I have found that the people in Ontario have been very open to our reform-minded policies and programs and people from all across the province are wishing to come and support a party which is in fact providing leadership, which they had not had for a long time. It may be that particular people in Muskoka are much less happy with the current leadership of the Tory party. In fact, they may even be leaving, in droves, those people across the way who used to be in government.

In my mind, our party will be open to all people to participate in programs, whatever they may be. I hold meetings on all occasions. People request meetings. In fact, I will entertain requests from all people who wish to attend my meetings. I will not discriminate on political allegiances or alliances. Anybody is welcome.

If the gentleman whom you mentioned was working with the gentleman from Muskoka who is retiring and who is, unfortunately, no longer required by that party or whatever, he is welcome to attend, as anybody is. Just to repeat something that was also said, anybody who has received an invitation is likewise free not to attend.

1450

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pope: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: I would ask you to review the comments of the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) today in question period to determine their veracity.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: There is a court jester in every crowd.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Sometimes we get a little overexcited.

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology concerning the government policy of purchasing imported goods, rather than domestically produced goods, a policy which is costing Ontario approximately 150,000 jobs a year.

I wonder if the minister can recall the policy that his party had when in opposition. If he cannot, I will try to prod his memory. It went as follows: "A Liberal government in Ontario would undertake all of its purchasing, wherever possible and reasonable, from Canadian-controlled firms. These firms would receive preferential treatment as to price. This preference could extend to as much as 40 per cent."

Could the minister tell us why that was a policy when in opposition and why now there appears to be no policy at all in this regard?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I might say to the member I realize a question like that was asked last week. At the time the question was asked I was attending a procurement ministers' meeting in Ottawa, and I can tell the member that it is still our aim to procure more of those supplies from within Canada, rather than outside.

Mr. Laughren: I wonder if I could repeat part of my question and ask the minister why it is that it was a policy when in opposition and it is not a policy when in government. At the conference the minister was at, one of the background papers he released when he went to that conference stated that out of 55,000 suppliers on the list for government purchasing, the 10 per cent preferential treatment given to domestic suppliers was used in only 20 cases.

How in the world can he claim that he has any kind of government procurement policy when he knows that, according to his own reports, this is the only industrialized country that does not use government procurement as an economic development policy. Why is that?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The member is not totally correct, because we do use government purchases as part of that program.

I can assure him besides that in the procurement area, my ministry is very interested in doing some of the things he has mentioned. We run such things as reverse trade shows where we identify products that can or should be purchased here in the province and in Canada, rather than outside. We are working towards those aims, which are excellent aims.

DELAY IN SENTENCING

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Solicitor General. It concerns a North York man who seriously injured a young woman in a car accident and subsequently pleaded guilty to charges of impaired driving and leaving the scene of the accident.

When this gentleman appeared in court, Judge Frank Dunlap, we understand, delayed sentencing him to convenience his recreational plans. I wonder how this affects the credibility of the government's drinking and driving program, when members of the Ontario judiciary treat a very serious breach of the law so frivolously.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: May I simply suggest that the issue is one more appropriately directed to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott)? If I may be permitted to comment—the minister is not here today; he is in Ottawa—but he has asked to see a transcript of the remarks from the judge with regard to that delay in sentencing and he has expressed his concern about the effect it does have on the drinking and driving program.

Mr. Andrewes: With respect, I would have been delighted to address this question to the Attorney General but there is someone else in his seat. That is not him.

I have constituents coming into my office who are asking for a stay in the suspension of a driver's licence so they can complete their harvest—the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) will understand that—so they can carry on their business, so they can put bread on the table, so they can support their families. We have a man who now wants a stay in his sentencing and a judge who has assented to that stay so he can go to a ball game.

Does the Solicitor General think that is fair? Does he think it is reasonable? Does he think it is equitable?

Mr. Brandt: It is ludicrous, that is what it is.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I am quite happy to concur with the remarks from the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) that it does throw some rather difficult views on the whole enforcement of the drinking and driving program we have had in the province. I can assure him that when the Attorney General returns and he has reviewed the transcript from the judge, potentially, further action may well be taken.

DOCTORS' BILLING PRACTICES

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Health. In view of the fact it is almost a year since we passed Bill 94, a bill that was

supposed to ban extra billing in Ontario, why is it that the minister has reimbursed patients \$17,055, where 247 patients have clearly been extra billed or he would not have reimbursed them, yet at the same time not one doctor has been charged by his ministry for breaking the law, Bill 94? Does he have a double standard in this province that doctors can get away with breaking the law and others cannot?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The primary goal of Bill 94, of course, was to provide us with mechanisms whereby people who were disadvantaged by extra billing could be reimbursed, and in fact we are doing that. We then seek to recover from those people the money where they did extra bill. We are proceeding to do that, and in many of those cases we are clearing up some misunderstandings as to what are problems under the legislation.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It is a pretty stupid system when the minister says if you break the law the most you are going to have to pay is exactly what you have extra billed. Where is the deterrent?

I would like to ask the minister how he can possibly say this process is working when Dr. Marshall Barkin at Mount Sinai is charging a \$500 standby fee and when Dr. Sheldon Herzig is charging a \$200 administrative fee for the eye surgery that he carries out, for such things as documentation to arrange the surgery with the hospital, a pre-operative report, an operative report and a post-operative communication with the family doctor? He is charging a \$200 administrative fee for all these things.

When is the minister going to get serious and start charging the doctors who are breaking this law in the province?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman knows that when situations or specifics of charges are made available to us, we make determinations with respect to whether there are extra billings being made. We then make a decision about how a declaration received from the patient is reviewed and perceived, and then we reimburse a patient if in fact those charges are extra billing. We are doing that.

We then proceed to recover from the physician and charge an administrative cost for our work in terms of pursuing, and sometimes we are able to clarify the administration under the act and solve some problems for the profession, that then are not repeated.

1500

ACID RAIN

Mr. Polsinelli: According to public reports filed recently in the United States, a lobby group

called Citizens for Sensible Control of Acid Rain spent more than \$3 million last year in fighting proposed acid rain controls in the US Congress. Can the minister tell us what effect this effort has had on the evolution of stricter emission controls in the United States and if it has had any effect on the minister's efforts to achieve, in co-operation with his American counterparts, more effective controls on acid rain?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The question, I think, related to acid rain?

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I know the question did not relate to the \$15,000 that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), when he was a minister, provided to Moe Carter to race in Europe, but it did relate to acid rain, and the honourable member said there was a major lobbying effort in the United States.

Mr. Martel: You are on thin ice. I can tell by the way you started.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: They fire these things over here and they expect nothing is coming back.

Mr. Andrewes: Tell us about Abe Schwartz before you get started. Remember the guy? Tell us about Murray's party.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I know that is old news.

Mr. Andrewes: What are they serving at Murray's party?

Mr. Rowe: Is René going to fly in?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I believe the member for Yorkview (Mr. Polsinelli) had asked a question. You could probably direct your remarks through the chair.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Yes, I will try to answer the question. I think it was related to the coal lobby within the United States and others who were in opposition to that.

The counteraction comes from two particular sources. First, it comes from Environment Canada and the national government, which undertake a communication through diplomatic channels with those in the United States in an attempt to counteract this kind of information. It is usually funnelled through the embassy in Washington and through the ambassador.

In addition to that, we as a provincial ministry are represented on a number of occasions in the United States to present the case for the province of Ontario as to what we have done and what we would like the Americans to do.

Mr. Grossman: Claudio, tell him that is tomorrow's question he is answering.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Polsinelli: I think the minister has perhaps failed to address the crux of my question. Perhaps I could read to him, as a supplementary—

Ms. Fish: Send him the right note, will you. Turn the page.

Mr. Grossman: He got the wrong envelope.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Polsinelli: I would like to read to the minister the first and last paragraphs of the Globe and Mail article. The first paragraph is, "An industry-supported group spent more than \$3 million"—and this is US dollars—"lobbying against proposed acid rain controls in the United States Congress last year." The last paragraph is, "Pollution controls bills were stalled in congressional debates last year."

Can the minister tell me what effect this \$3 million in lobbying efforts from industry-sponsored lobbyists in the United States had on our controls and on the effort he has been making with his American counterparts to have more effective controls?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I must say the supplementary was as good as the original question; excellent supplementary, excellent original question.

Of course, we are optimistic that there are a number of people within the United States Congress, both on the House side and on the Senate side, who are desirous of acid rain abatement legislation. Despite the efforts of those who are opposed to it, the coal industry and others, we have found people have been spurred on by the kind of support they have had, both in the United States and here in Canada, particularly in Ontario.

Of course, when we were represented at the National Sportsmen's Show in New York City, that was widely covered in the United States. There have been a number of opportunities for those of us in the province of Ontario from the Ministry of the Environment to make the case and in every instance, rather than a resentment on the part of our American friends, what we have found was that there was encouragement from them to continue our activities and to explain our programs south of the border.

We invite our American friends to undertake activities that are as environmentally desirable as those we are undertaking. We look forward to the assistance of the federal government in this, and I am assured that in fact it has been pleased to offer that assistance to us whenever we have inquired.

ONTARIO HYDRO RATES IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Gordon: I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Energy. When is the minister going to put bread back into the mouths of people who live in northern Ontario? At the present time we have 20,000 workers who have lost their jobs over the past couple of years. In Sudbury we are looking at anywhere from 700 to 1,000 jobs being lost from Inco by 1990, and yet the minister is not willing to lower hydro rates in northern Ontario to produce more jobs. When is he going to act?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: We certainly are acting and we are acting in a very positive way. We have set up a board to examine the possibilities of using hydro rates as an economic benefit tool in northern Ontario. We have set up a board that is going to react to the kind of questions the member is raising.

It is very odd that this is the first time this has ever happened, after 40 years of the Conservatives governing without ever responding to the problems in northern Ontario. Believe me, it is happening now and we are doing many other things. We are moving my forestry department north. We are going to move 1,200 jobs north. We are doing all kinds of things that are going to benefit northern Ontario.

In fact, there is a great feeling in northern Ontario now that they are going to play a full role in the province. They are not going to be considered very remote, but they are going to play a full role in the economic benefits that are flowing from the Nixon boom.

Mr. Gordon: Perhaps we do not have as many farms as they do down in southern Ontario, but I think even in the north we would call that manure. Where was the minister when it came to lowering gas prices in northern Ontario? It seems to me that he is the minister who is responsible for those high gas prices and he has done nothing. When is he going to do something about that?

More important and to the point, the minister says he is for the north. Where is that treatment centre for prisoners that was promised to Sudbury? We do not see that. More important—and what we are talking about is energy—when is the minister going to act to lower hydro rates in northern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I have already answered the question. The member asked two or three that should have been directed to other ministers.

As the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Natural Resources, I want to share something

with the member. The fact of the matter is that for the first time we have opened two hydraulic plants in northern Ontario. That has not happened in many years. We are going to open many more hydraulic plants across northern Ontario. We are going to build roads there with money that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is flowing to Ontario. We are going to move things to northern Ontario. We are doing things that have never been done before.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Mr. Speaker, the man is badly informed.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to remind all members that the members of this House are responsible for their standing orders. They are the ones who set the standing orders. I have said that one member should be recognized to speak each time and one only. I think quite a few members have been speaking recently.

Mr. Gordon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to make this point of order very clear to you. It is on standing order 36, and that is the one that says you cannot charge higher gas prices and say you are paying for the roads.

Mr. Speaker: I would suggest that your House leader probably show you the book.

RAILCAR INDUSTRY

Mr. Mackenzie: I have a question of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Is the minister aware of the very real concerns of the steelworkers in Hamilton at National Steel Car, and in Trenton and Montreal, concerning the future of the railcar industry in Canada and whether the remaining greatly reduced work force, as well as the very future of the industry itself, will survive? Is he aware that in their meetings with the federal government recently, the very clear impression was left with the workers that their industry was one of the chips in the free trade talks that are going on right now?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I know of the member's concern in this matter. I can say to him that it is also a concern of ours. We are keeping a very close watch on what is happening with this. We are in very close touch with the federal government concerning these matters and the protection of those jobs.

1510

Mr. Mackenzie: I might wonder what effect the minister is having then on the federal government.

Does the minister not realize that it is cheaper to bring a railcar into the country, keep it for the 90 days allowed under the permit and pay a \$40-a-month rental fee from then on if one wants to keep the car here—a similar circumstance which does exist if we send our cars out of the country—and that this is preventing the building of new cars, along with a number of other things?

Can the minister tell us what he is prepared to do in the way of interventions with his federal colleagues to see that this industry does remain a viable one, given the importance of rail in Canada?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: Of course it is a very important industry in Ontario and, again, I can assure the member that we are having discussions with the federal government, the people and the industry within the province, and doing what we can to make sure that those jobs are maintained.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Davis: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

Two weeks ago, the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan) urged the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) to provide funds for the Sheppard line. Two days ago, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) practically announced the construction of this crucial transportation project. When will the minister announce to this House the approval of the Sheppard line, its costs and its date of construction?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I am meeting with the member later this week to discuss other matters of transit, so he may want some funding for that issue perhaps as a priority. But I am surprised that the member, in this business and in the previous business, would have taken a very small article in one of the local papers as gospel.

The Minister for Municipal Affairs has not said anything that was not said in the statement here, I think on May 7.

Mr. Davis: It is obvious that the Minister of Transportation and Communication's colleagues know more about the transportation policy than he does, and understand its importance and crucial need to the northern part of Scarborough and North York. Metro council has agreed that the Sheppard line is a priority and must be built now.

The Toronto Transit Commission has also indicated that it is their top priority. Thousands of people in cars and in buses are anxiously awaiting some indication from the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs is quoted as saying that there is still a chance for the line to be built. Why are these indications coming from the Minister of Transportation and Communication's colleagues, and why will he not show any leadership and approve the funding for that transportation system?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I cannot stand here and deny that we have shown leadership. The announcement of the greater Toronto area two weeks ago took more leadership, more initiative, and thankfully more money from the provincial Treasurer, than these guys did in 40 years for this province.

WESTERN COAL

Mr. Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Energy.

The minister is aware that there is a committee here today from western Canada to discuss questions of low sulphur western Canadian coal and I believe he or his staff are probably meeting with the committee this afternoon. The minister is also aware that as a result of the Minister of the Environment's (Mr. Bradley) announcement that Ontario Hydro will no longer have access to the banking provision of the Countdown Acid Rain program, there is going to be additional pressure for Hydro to start to firm up its plans for how it proposes to reduce acid gas emissions in Ontario.

Can the minister tell us whether he is prepared to tell this House that low sulphur coal is a reasonable part of that mix and that as his present contracts run out he will replace his coal needs with low sulphur coal from western Canada?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I am very pleased to answer a question relating to the burning of western coal. I am very disappointed, in fact, that a federal minister at one time made some comment about us buying some western coal. He was obviously not aware of the fact that Ontario Hydro is at the present time buying three million tons of western coal and paying a \$70 premium to do that.

The fact of the matter is that we certainly are very willing to buy western coal and use it in a way that is going to be to the advantage of reducing the acid rain emissions. The problem, of course, is that there has to be a very large component of shipping to get it down here. I will be talking to Ontario Hydro as to how they are going to meet the commitment that they have to in order to comply with the Minister of the Environment's very fine regulations to prove to the Americans that we really mean to cut back on acid rain emissions.

The fact of the matter is that these discussions have been ongoing for a good long time. I met with Tony Brummet from British Columbia, who is two ministers removed, in fact, from the present minister, so this is not something new to Ontario. We are very willing to enter agreements with our sister provinces in the west to be able to share the buoyancy of this economy, but of course it means we also have to take into account the cost that is going to be put to the consumers in Ontario. If we are going to protect our manufacturing base, we have to be certain that Ontario buys power at the best possible price, which is precisely what this minister is going to do.

PETITION

SCHOOL RENOVATION

Mr. Shymko: I would like to present the following urgent petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we, the Home and School Association of Howard public school and the Howard school community, hereby state the seriousness of our commitment and concern regarding the need for the renovations of the Howard public school building;

"And whereas, for the sake of our children and future students at Howard, we look to you now for swift and efficient action which this matter so urgently requires;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government and in particular the Minister of Education to:

"State that they will ensure financial support to the city of Toronto Board of Education in a period of time less than two years, that renovations necessary to the physical health and the proper educational environment of children may be expeditiously carried out.

"We, the members of the Howard Park public school community, hereby state the seriousness of our commitment and concern regarding the need for the renovations of Howard public school building. For the sake of our children and future students of Howard, we look to you now for swift and efficient action, which this matter so urgently requires."

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CITY OF TORONTO ACT

Mr. Offer moved first reading of Bill Pr17, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF TORONTO ACT

Mr. Offer moved first reading of Bill Pr56, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

YORK FIRE AND CASUALTY INSURANCE COMPANY ACT

Mr. Cousens moved first reading of Bill Pr14, An Act respecting York Fire and Casualty Insurance Company.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Martel: Mr. Speaker, last week I requested under two standing orders that you assist me in obtaining both written and oral answers from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). That is approximately a week ago. I gave you a list; I could give you a much longer list. Those answers are still not forthcoming. I am wondering when Mr. Speaker is going to be able to ensure that the standing orders are lived up to by the Minister of Labour and those answers are going to be forthcoming.

1520

Mr. Speaker: As the honourable member knows, I am very keenly interested and involved in making certain the rules are upheld. I do not see the Minister of Labour here but I am certain the government House leader will take note and make certain the Minister of Labour will respond.

Orders of the day.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to call order 35. The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) is about to come and move this thing.

Mr. McClellan: My understanding was that we were going to do the 35th order tomorrow because the standing orders do not permit us to do bills in the same policy field on the same day.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As a matter of fact, that is correct. The committee is willing to postpone its deliberations for the brief time Bill 78 will take, but the honourable member is entirely correct and I would like to call order 17.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT (continued)

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES CONFLITS D'INTÉRÊTS DES MEMBRES DE L'ASSEMBLÉE (continuée)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 23, An Act to provide

for greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office.

Suite du débat ajourné sur la motion de deuxième lecture du projet de loi 23, Loi assurant une plus grande certitude quant au rapprochement des intérêts personnels des membres de l'Assemblée et du Conseil des ministres avec les devoirs de leurs fonctions.

Mr. Cousens: When the Clerk read off the title, it is too bad he did not go to the back of the bill in section 19 where the short title says Members' Conflict of Interest Act. It would make an awful lot more sense. I also like the title that was given by the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe): An act for the Premier to cop out of conflict-of-interest enforcement on members of his cabinet. That is really what we are dealing with. We are dealing with an act that is full of problems. It is going to create problems for this Legislature in the future because it does not address the whole real question of conflict of interest.

It has the words, the public imagery of being an act that deals with a very important issue that, quite candidly, came to the fore because of the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) and the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) who were able to highlight problems of conflict of interest within the government. It has been through their research and their direct questions that members of the government have had to reassess their own positions, and through that assessment, ministers have had to resign.

This is an important bill that affects the future of government in this province. It is time for us to give good leadership and to deal with more than just the form and get to the substance of it. What I see here are words that do not necessarily go to the root of the problem or deal with the issue as it really is.

We will deal with it as it is called. It is really Bill 23 and started out as Bill 160. May I suggest that I hope the government will possibly take it back under further advisement after a number of our members have discussed it further, members who share with me the common concern that we are dealing with a fundamental issue in society; that is, the whole process of selecting and choosing people to represent the people in the House that we are addressing right now.

It is an important bill. Yesterday, I was speaking on one particular section. I would like to back off and correct a certain direction I was taking because in section 12 it indicates that

members are to provide certain data to the commissioner. There is an "except" that excludes the public release of certain parts of those data. May I say that my intent was still correct and I will go back just to apprise honourable members of what I was saying at that time.

In my remarks yesterday, I was indicating that clauses (a) through (l) would all become public information, except that I was not including the very important word prefacing the beginning of those subsections. Therefore, I apologize to the House that I became somewhat carried away in my analysis.

I come back, none the less, and point to subsection 12(3) of this same bill. Subsection 3 virtually does what I was afraid would happen under section 12.

What subsection 3 does say is, "The public disclosure statement shall contain a statement of the nature of the assets referred to in clauses (1)(f) to (l) and the name and location of persons or institutions against whom the assets are held."

What we are talking about is that the public disclosure statement can contain information about the nature of "the amount of cash on hand or on deposit with a chartered bank, trust company or other financial institution in Ontario that is lawfully entitled to accept deposits."

What is the government really talking about? If in fact the public disclosure statement can start talking about the nature of a member's assets, not just a cabinet minister but all members' assets, the nature of those can be made public.

I begin to say this becomes a concern, because when one starts having not only the cash on hand or the financial institution in which it is located—mind you, the amount does not have to be listed, but everything else will be, "the amount of Canada savings bonds and other investments or securities"—may I suggest that it is an intrusion on the privacy of a member to have all this information made public so that his whole financial status becomes public knowledge?

I believe the Quebec system certainly has merits. In Quebec, there is a commissioner, and the commissioner has the right to gather information about members of the National Assembly. This commissioner knows the background of each member. This information is shared with him. It is open. It is signed. It is authorized. It is a sense in which there is a sharing of data with that commissioner.

But may I suggest to the members, there is only one person who has it? There is only one person with whom it is shared. It is not necessarily going to come back in and out of the

House. Members in that assembly in Quebec are able to rely on the decision of that commissioner. He has an awful lot of power, but that power, when exercised properly and fairly, as I am sure it would be, is sufficient to allow members to know their public trust is being upheld.

Under these guidelines, members who will agree to have that information made public are now going to have things known about them that otherwise is not anyone else's business.

When I said yesterday, why do we not require members of this Legislature to have medical examination; why do we not require them to have mental examinations—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is a good idea.

Mr. Cousens: I would agree. See there? It is just the inroads of the whole thing, and some might not pass those exams. There might be some honourable members who would find out they do not have what it takes.

I do not think that is important, because the public, when it elects a member—the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon) has been to the polls more times than any other member in this House except maybe the member for Elgin (Mr. McNeil). The fact is, people have accepted him for what he is, who he is; they are not interested in knowing his mental background, his medical background or his financial background, because they have established a sense of trust in him.

Mr. Martel: Anybody who tries to pass phoney money—

Mr. Cousens: I do not think he has done that with provincial money, though; it has only been with his own currency. What he will do is water down our currency so it is worth nothing anyway because it will drive inflation up and the deficit will increase. There are other ways in which he will make our currency less than what it should be and what it is.

My point is that this bill has problems within it. For us to quickly come along and say, "It is just another simple bill"—it is not.

I was going through the bill further. I would like to comment on section 2. In section 2, it indicates just who is involved with a conflict of interest. There is no reference in section 2 to a member's spouse or the person with whom he is living or has a special relationship as defined under section 1.

May I suggest that there is a real concern, if you are dealing with conflict of interest, about having an understanding of the total relationship of a member of the provincial Legislature with another person. In fact, what could be happening

is that a member of this House might well be living with someone, his or her own spouse, and doing things in his or her favour. There is nothing within this definition or this bill, except for the declaration or filing of a statement, which will force us to have any understanding of another relationship.

1530

I believe that is a failure of this bill, not to address that relationship that members would have either with their spouse or with someone else. Therefore, section 2 of the bill should be redefined to include spousal involvement of some kind. It should have some reference to any spousal interference or action taken by a member of this Legislature for another person with whom he is living.

Section 3 of the bill indicates that each member of this House who has any special access to information and acts upon it in any way can be found guilty under the penalties section of section 16. I believe in the intent of these sections. I think the intent is saying quite honestly that we, as members of the Legislature, have to treat the information we are given as members honourably and correctly and in the service of our constituents. But since this province does not have an access-to-information act, there is an awful lot of information that flows through our offices that is not public information. What is public and what is private? Therefore, I believe that coincident with the development of this bill, there should be an acceleration by the government to introduce the access-to-information act, so there can be more sharing of information of what is going on within government.

That is not just of slight passing moment. It says here, "A member shall not use information that is gained in the execution of his or her office and is not available to the general public...." Quite candidly, a lot of the information that passes across our desks is not generally available. There are times when we have committees in camera and there are other data that go through. Somehow or other, I think that should be clarified.

I am worried about section 6, which talks about people who are going to be affected by this bill. I am reading, "The executive council, a member of the executive council or an employee of a ministry (other than an employee of an agency, board or commission) shall not knowingly...." It identifies the people who will be impacted by this legislation. Why then does the

bill not deal with the impact of those people not fulfilling the terms of this legislation?

In the penalties section, where it is going to come along with the hard hand of the law and cause members to be reprimanded or fined or to pay compensation or lose their seats, there is absolutely no reference to any penalty for any other person who has dealt in conflict of interest with matters dealing with the provincial government. Why not? This act does not touch upon it except by saying they shall be included. If they are not going to have a penalty, if there is no sense in which they are going to be monitored, then I am saying this bill has a serious problem to it.

It should have some way in which every person who is doing business in the public service is going to be accountable to the people of Ontario for what he is doing, for how and why he is doing it and that his intentions are honourable. If in fact there are senior civil servants who are close to the executive council, who have private companies or private businesses, are they not going to be under the restriction of the executive council too? Are they not also going to be challenged and is there not also some penalty that can be levied upon them?

I believe that is a serious shortfall in this bill. It should go further than just saying, "We are going to deal with all these people," and then, by virtue of the fact that it does not talk about them later on in the bill, fail to address a much greater problem.

Through the questions that were raised in this House about members who had conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest and whose conflict of interest was later found, we have found in this House that there is a problem. That is why our party would support an honest resolution to the problems associated with conflict of interest. Deal with it more so, though; do not just say it is being dealt with. The honourable Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has mentioned it, but he has not begun to address it fully.

We cannot accept that. The people of Ontario expect more of us than that. They expect this House and those who are civil servants within our government and from the province to be honourable in all their dealings. Therefore, let us go a step further and make sure they are accountable. Let us make sure that there are going to be some teeth in this and that it is not just having words to it. It has got to have a follow-through so that every person can be truly and fully accountable, as they should be.

There are sections of the bill that begin to deal with certain aspects of conflict of interest that I believe take the right direction. In having open trust, it accepts the fact that there are going to be some members who will have businesses they can carry on through an arm's-length relationship and indeed recognizes there will be some dealings that take place. I believe there is a lot of sensitivity shown in section 7.

I am concerned with the appointment of the commissioner. The commissioner has a very, very large responsibility. I wonder what would happen in a few years if the government decides to appoint the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) or the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan) as the commissioners for the Members' Conflict of Interest act. Who knows who is going to be made the commissioner for this very important office? They are good people. I respect them, but they probably have more experience in this special area than many of us do. I wonder what the attributes would be to appoint any such person to this office.

In Ottawa, not too long ago, there was the McGrath report. The McGrath report was an approach to trying to open up government so that all members of the federal House would somehow be more involved in its processes and members of the opposition would again have some input to appointments at high levels of government.

It was through the McGrath report that a new process was established for the election of a Speaker, and the present Speaker in the federal House was elected by all the members of the House, through ballot. This was a way in which every member of that House had a chance to truly participate in the democratic process. It was not something, as has been the case in the past, where the Prime Minister would make a selection.

What happens now in the appointment of a commissioner, a commissioner who could be any person selected by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, who "shall appoint a person" to the role of commissioner? That very same person may have some special prejudices that are not in keeping with the thinking and feelings of other members of the House, and yet what act or what way do other members have of raising that for discussion?

I have to say that this office of commissioner is a very important officer. I think it is incumbent upon the government which makes the appointment to ensure that, whoever it is, it is going to be someone acceptable to all members of this

House. If in fact someone is selected who is not acceptable to all members of the House, then that very same person could be undermining the rights, the freedoms, the privileges, the honour, the integrity and all the characteristics that make up the members of this House.

I would like very, very much to see the commissioner have a special appointment process that goes beyond it, so that those who are members of other parties in the government will have some input in the selection of that person. Something like the McGrath report in Ottawa, which gave an opportunity for all members to be more actively involved in the running of government, could also be brought to bear in the selection of this commissioner.

I am concerned as well, in section 9, that this commissioner, whose responsibilities it will be to police all members of this House to see that they have submitted their financial data and maybe eventually their medical and mental data and other things, is going to have a term of five years. I believe that is too long a term. Maybe we should be looking at a much shorter term, subject to renewal, to allow that person to be reviewed and to be watched so we can make sure no prejudice is being shown by his actions. I do not think this has been thought out deeply enough.

1540

I am concerned as well in the whole disclosure process that is taking place. Every person is going to be treated very much the same as to what has to be disclosed, how much and so on. As I have gone through section 12 again where it asks for full financial disclosure by all members of the House, I question whether, if a person has any asset value in any situation, that in itself should show there is going to be an opportunity for some conflict.

Why are the amounts and values so important? What they are asking for in this bill is the amount of cash on hand or on deposit with a certain chartered bank, the amount of Canada savings bonds, the value of registered retirement savings plans, the amount invested in open-ended mutual funds, the value of guaranteed investment certificates, the value of annuities and the value of pension rights. If a person has any pension rights, it will be relative to his own needs and his own importance whether he has them. Is it germane to this bill that the value and the amount be given such an importance? I question that.

I believe that if we are going to have all this made public, we should remove the values and the amounts of anyone who has any investment and let it just indicate that he has them. My real

fallback position is that I hope we will not get into this whole public disclosure of all the assets and all the values that every person has.

I am concerned about section 14 and how public the process will be in making public and sharing with everybody in the province what each individual person has. I think it touches upon the rights and freedoms of members of this House and of people who will be running for public office.

There are a number of aspects to this bill that make it objectionable to me. It says to the public that Ontario is dealing with conflict of interest. It does not do that. It does not do that because it does not deal with the whole circumstances that surround conflict of interest. It does not deal with the spousal relationships. It does not deal with the civil service. It does not deal with the total circumstances that can be involved in conflict of interest.

First, this bill should go further to enunciate and define clearly what those relationships are. Second, I believe this bill will undermine the very foundations that cause people to want to serve. When people offer themselves to serve in any of our three parties or in the fourth party that is about to be formed, people do so with the sense of wanting to serve their community. Do we want to put in front of them a disincentive for service, some reason or rationale why they may not want their name to stand before the public?

By asking for all this information to become public, are we then giving people a reason not to become involved? We want a whole cross-section of the public to be involved in a very significant way in the electoral, political and democratic process that has made our province as strong as it is. To remove that opportunity by virtue of excluding certain people is going to be a very large negative to the future of government.

I hope this bill is defeated. I hope the government reconsiders and comes back with a far more intelligent view of the needs of Ontario to ensure that the people are protected from anyone who is going to be in office for the wrong reasons. I believe that purpose is honourable and valid, that no person in this House should be here for other than the primary reason of making this province a better one and to serve the people.

If members are here to serve themselves, then I believe the system has to find a way of exposing them. But let us not just have an exposé of all the attributes and all the characteristics at the whim and fancy of a commissioner who can deal with these matters in a far too open way and who can remove some of the privacy that I think is

paramount to a human being, a human being who has a desire to retain that sense of self-respect and dignity and that sense of privacy that is his.

Yesterday I talked about the governor of New York, Mario Cuomo, who was considered probably one of the best candidates for President of the United States. He is purposely withdrawing himself because he does not want to have himself exposed.

Mr. McGuigan: He says he will take a draft.

Mr. Cousens: He just might be drafted, but then along comes all that opening up of everything else that is part and parcel of what he is all about.

This is an important bill. It does not just affect the members of the Legislature of Ontario; it affects all the people of Ontario, because whom the people elect and whom they place in trust is going to be affected by how this bill is implemented, how it is followed and how people are going to interpret it in the future. I am concerned about that and I think therefore this bill should be defeated to allow the government to go back to work and rethink it and make sure it covers the whole ground far more intelligently than it has to date.

Mr. Baetz: I am pleased to speak to this bill. It is rather strange that about two years ago, when the question of possible cabinet conflict of interest was first raised, as all members in this Legislature remember very vividly, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) stood in his place and proudly claimed to the world that, "My cabinet is not only clean, not only cleaner than clean, not only 99.44 per cent clean, but squeaky clean."

Mr. Bernier: Squeakily clean.

Mr. Baetz: A bunch of mice.

Perhaps even at that time we should have suspected he might be protesting a bit too much, I do not know, but I do remember very clearly, and all of us do, his claims about his squeaky clean cabinet.

What has happened in the meantime, of course—and here today we are debating a bill to deal with conflict of interest—is there has been a report from the standing committee on public accounts, Report on the Allegation of Conflict of Interest Concerning Elinor Caplan, MPP, the Aird report, the Report on Allegation of Conflict of Interest Concerning René Fontaine, MPP, and so on.

So why this enormous, unprecedented interest and activity in this question of conflict of interest when indeed we have the privilege of having in this province not a clean cabinet or a clean-clean

cabinet but a squeaky clean cabinet? We all know why. The Premier had no sooner uttered those words when serious conflict-of-interest charges were levelled and were made to stick.

I am not going to go into all the details of what happened in these particular cases; my colleagues have already expanded on them and they are a matter of public record. The thing that concerns me more than anything else about all of this is the attitude of the Premier in this.

I would like to confine my remarks pretty well to the role of the first minister, whether it is the Premier or the Prime Minister, in setting the style and setting the value systems on matters of conflict of interest, and also the role of the cabinet ministers.

1550

Obviously, this bill will also be dealing with the conflict-of-interest questions for private members, but I would like to concentrate on the first minister and on cabinet. It seems to me there is a relationship that is indeed unique in all of society: the relationship between the first minister and his or her cabinet ministers. This is a very unique relationship. It is not a normal employer-employee relationship. It is not a normal managerial relationship to the people he or she is responsible for or to whom they are accountable. It is a very different relationship.

So much of that relationship is not set down. It cannot be set down in words and rules and regulations. There are some general guidelines, but so much of that relationship depends on a nonverbal, a nonwritten, full communication between that all-powerful first minister and his or her cabinet ministers.

I suppose it is very hard to really understand this relationship until one has served in that situation, as I had the privilege of doing for some eight years for Premier William Davis and later, for a short time, for Premier Miller.

During all that time, I do not recall Premier Davis ever saying to me, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not," when it came to matters of conflict of interest, or giving me long memos or long sermons on how I should conduct myself or how I should avoid conflict of interest. But I knew, and I think every one of our members and ministers in cabinet knew, precisely where Premier Davis stood on the matter of conflict of interest. He conveyed that to us without having to set out the relationship in so many written words or so many legal documents. We knew what he expected of us and I think we knew what the consequence would be if we disregarded his value system. So

we were relatively free of conflict-of-interest charges, certainly during my years.

Today we have a new government, a new Premier, and a Premier who, I get the very disconcerting sense, is like the three monkeys, "Hear no evil; see no evil; speak no evil." Is that not the case? Is it not a matter of interest that in every one of these conflict-of-interest cases that was eventually made to stick, the initial reaction by the Premier was: "Nothing is wrong. I know of nothing. I do not know. I have not heard about that. I did not see anything."

We had it again yesterday when there was a very obviously inappropriate invitation extended by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) to his famous cocktail party. Yesterday the Premier came in here and said: "I think everything is fine. I have heard of nothing. I have seen nothing. I know of nothing that is questionable about my Minister of Health."

Then of course, the Minister of Health, taking his cue from the Premier, taking the value system—no memo, I am sure; maybe the minister did get a memo from the Premier, though I doubt it, but he takes his cue from the Premier—stands up here today in what had to be the greatest charade of smugness, of arrogance, of naïveté, and said, "There is nothing wrong with what I did."

Now we are getting into value systems. All the rules and all the regulations are not going to change that minister's attitude towards what he did or, God knows, what else he does. The whole question of conflict of interest rests ultimately and essentially on value systems, as it did yesterday and does again today.

Really, I feel that we can, as is proposed in the bill here, establish a commissioner. We can establish a policeman. We can give him or her all kinds of powers. We can set down *modus operandi* as to how this commissioner is going to act and what kind of punishment the commissioner will hand out to any minister who has been caught in conflict.

We can go into all of this, and I suppose this is necessary. We have to have some conflict-of-interest guidelines, some conflict-of-interest legislation. We have to have some *modus operandi* set out in legislation, but I cannot help but feel that unless and until the Premier, the first minister, sets the pace, sets the level, establishes the social and the moral environment and deals firmly with ministers who do not comply with that high value system, most of these guidelines and regulations will not amount to a great deal

and will not provide the people of this province with the kind of protection they require.

As I say, it is not asking too much of a Premier to deal harshly with ministers who fall short of his or her standards. It should not be hard at all, because the relationship between a Premier and a minister is unique. He does not have to spell out all the reasons in the world he is going to drop this minister or that minister. He simply says, "I do not expect you to serve in my cabinet any more." There is probably not another employer-employee relationship in the whole, wide world today where the employer, the boss or the manager has that kind of power, but the Premier certainly has it in cabinet.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Can't even get to court.

Mr. Baetz: It might go to court all right, but it would not get him very far.

That is the kind of powerful relationship the first minister has over his cabinet ministers. Therefore, I think it is not expecting too much for us to turn to the first minister and expect him to set the value systems and his ministers to follow. Quite frankly, that is my deepest point of concern with the present government.

I am not saying for one minute that the first minister is immoral or that he is guilty of this crime or that crime; not at all. But I have a feeling that this first minister views this conflict-of-interest question not as being a moral question or an immoral question, but as an amoral question. It is not very important in the value system at all. Certainly, the same applies to the individual ministers.

Frankly, I think the best guideline will be the ministers' own value systems. If individual elected members who are charged with cabinet responsibility personally believe there is nothing wrong with using their position of power to assist themselves and their friends and relatives, all the guidelines are not likely to deter them in every instance. They will regard these acts of self-help as neither moral nor immoral but as amoral and something that naturally comes with the terrain.

1600

If, on the other hand, an elected representative regards his appointment as a cabinet minister as a trust placed upon him to work only for the best interests of the public, there will be little need for him to study conflict-of-interest guidelines. He will know instinctively and intuitively what is right and in the best interests of the public and what is wrongful self-aggrandizement.

I read that because I rather like those lines. They happen to be my own, in my last newsletter.

Mr. Wildman: You are quoting yourself?

Mr. Baetz: I am quoting myself because a few months after I had written those lines, I looked at them again and thought they were still pretty good. That is always the test: when you have said something that is pretty good, read it a year later. Some of it you will throw away, some of it will stick. This I like and I will repeat it from here on in.

If the Minister of Health is really convinced today that he did nothing wrong, if his value system convinces him that he did nothing wrong, then all the guidelines in the world are not going to help one iota.

To get back to one of the main features of this present legislation, which is to establish a commissioner who is going to police us and who is going to punish us if we are caught in conflict of interest, I feel we can pass the bill or we can defeat it, we can establish this person; it does not matter a heck of a lot. The world is going to go on essentially the way it is right now unless and until the first minister here takes seriously the whole issue of conflict of interest and deals with his cabinet in a very stern manner. The message will very quickly get through and I think we will begin to see some changes.

In a sense, it is simple to say our duty is now done; we have passed this legislation, we have set up the commissioner, we have spelled out a few more guidelines to indicate when one is in conflict and when one is not; now our job is done and we wash our hands of the whole issue and the world will go on in a much better way than it has in the past and the government of Ontario will once again return to the very high moral standards it did enjoy for so many years under the Progressive Conservative administration.

But unless and until we see some changes of attitude—of course, changes of attitude can come with changes in parties. When we return to power and we have our own first minister in place with cabinet, then perhaps there will be a return to different standards and different mores as far as conflict of interest is concerned.

I can take or leave this bill.

Mr. Hennessy: Leave it.

Mr. Baetz: My very distinguished friend the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy) wants me to leave it. I will be prepared. He wants to leave it; people ought to take seriously what he says.

That is my central theme, my central thesis. There is an old saying—I think it is European; it does not matter a heck of a lot, it has universal truth in it—that a dead fish begins to decay and

stink from the head on. That is where the smell starts. The fishermen know that. In this case, the same thing applies. Better conflict-of-interest activity here and higher standards dealing with conflict of interest start right across there with number one, numero uno, and spread out to the ministers.

When we have it there, we will have it all the way and the people of Ontario will be served a heck of a lot better than they have been in these last two shaky years. If what we have seen is a squeaky clean cabinet, I wonder what an ordinary clean cabinet would look like. It would be pretty terrible.

Mr. Philip: After listening to the last analogy about fish, one must wonder whether it is not the member who has been floundering rather than the instigators of this act. I was listening to his pleonastic, oratorical sonorities and I simply have to ask the member, because it was not clear, is he voting for the bill or against the bill?

The other question I ask the member is, what is there in this bill that in any way would make the first minister less accountable? What is there that would make a Premier less accountable than by making guidelines, by making no rules? Under this system one would have clearly defined rules and obligations which, if not followed, the first minister, any cabinet minister or any member of the House would have to be held accountable for. Maybe he can answer those questions.

Mr. Wildman: I would like to ask the member whether he can make clear what his position is with regard to the obligations of ordinary members under this bill. He went on at great length about members of the executive council but I did not hear his view with regard to the provisions relating to members who are not members of the cabinet.

Mr. Baetz: To reply first to the last question dealing with private members, I have been a member of cabinet for some eight years and I have been a private member for two years. Frankly, I do not think the great concern in the bill should be addressed to private members. When we come to conflict of interest, the big concern still has to be with the first minister and cabinet. I cannot get too exercised about the conduct of the private members as far as conflict of interest is concerned.

In terms of the question directed by the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) about this bill and the role of the first minister, the cabinet and so forth, it does not do it. I do not think this bill could very appropriately spell that out. If that is to be set out elsewhere, it should be done, but I go

back to my point that we still are going to have to rely very heavily on the value systems that guide these people, the first minister and the cabinet. Quite frankly, if a first minister has any doubts about the value systems operating with any of his ministers, he should not invite them into cabinet in the first place.

Finally, as to the question of how I look at this bill and whether I am going to vote for or against it, I will know better at the end of this debate which way it will go. I do not think this is going to create a brave new world one way or the other.

Mr. McCague: I am glad the honourable farmer, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, and I are here to discuss some of the things that might apply to farmers. I see by the report that the member is now incorporated. I recall looking very fondly at the good crops in that part of the province.

1610

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I remember you were very critical of the Brant county crops.

Mr. McCague: I should relate the story of a committee of this Legislature going to Windsor, I believe it was, and the honourable member, as he should do, has been telling me about all the great things and the great crops that were in his riding. He was driving back and forth on that road every day. The crops did look quite good from a car, I am sure, but when you got on a bus and looked down, it looked more like a rice paddy than a crop of corn coming up. The member was very embarrassed, as I am sure he was when some of these conflicts arose or came to his attention earlier on.

I have not been on the committees to study the alleged conflicts that various members had, nor connected with any committee in consideration of this kind of legislation, but what strikes me as a little odd is that the Honourable John Black Aird was asked to do a particular job, which was to examine the statements filed by the present ministers and determine whether the ministers had complied with the guidelines. Second, he was to assess any allegations of conflict of interest which might arise prior to the completion of the report; and third, to consider the entire question of conflict of interest and make recommendations for new rules regarding ministerial conduct and new mechanisms for implementing and enforcing those rules.

He points out that he addressed only the first and third points, because no allegations of conflict of interest arose during his acceptance of the request of the Premier. At the end of all that consideration and looking into the affairs of the

ministers, which I suppose was a very difficult task for the ministers themselves, he did recommend a draft bill. As I read it, that bill addresses only the ministers of the crown.

Mr. Philip: Have you read the bill?

Mr. McCague: That report addresses only the members of the executive council.

As I recall the system—in 1967, I chose to stand in my riding of Dufferin-Simcoe as a person to seek the nomination and withdrew in favour of the then sitting member's nomination as the candidate. From that time, if not before, I took a very active interest in politics in the province and in Canada. I recall that in some provinces in the years that followed, politics had a rather bad name. I recall many of my constituents saying to me: "You wouldn't want to go in with that group, would you? They can't be trusted. You can't get anything out of them unless you hand them something under the table," or "You can't do this and you can't do that without—"; the implication was that you could not do anything without being dishonest.

I must say that I pledged to myself at that time that, yes, in fact you could be elected to this House and you could be honest. I admit that once during my 12 years here, I was indirectly offered a bribe. A chap phoned from my riding and said to my executive assistant, who was then Dan Needles, that he would be very happy to pay \$1,000 if I, the member, could get his son out of jail. Mr. Needles was a very sharp young gentleman, and he very quickly said: "There is no point in talking to him at all. He won't do it. Goodbye."

That was the end of it. That was the only one in 12 years. That does not make me think it is a dishonest place.

However, some provinces have a little different system from ours. I think there is the odd province, one or two maybe, that is noted for the way it does business, whether it has ever been proved—well, it has in a couple of cases; they are noted for the way they do business.

When that kind of mentality was sweeping the country, then-Premier Davis brought out some guidelines for conduct and the things that a person must do if he thought he could get into the executive council, if Mr. Davis wanted the person in the executive council. Those were good guidelines; granted they were not a bill, but they were good guidelines. If any member did not follow those guidelines, Mr. Davis did not dilly-dally or send somebody, or a commission or a task force to find out what he should do about

a certain member. He took the bull by the horns and it was done.

I suggest the Premier could have done the same thing and used the guidelines that were in force then and conducted himself in the same way that Mr. Davis had done for, I think, the previous 14 years. No, he put it out for a look by the Honourable John Black Aird.

There is nobody in this House who has more respect for the Honourable Mr. Aird than I do. He was an excellent Lieutenant Governor. He did come back and he did a good job at what he was asked to do. Then we find a bill coming out, Bill 23, which expands it to all members of this assembly. Granted, it is not to the same extent as with the ministers, but it does extend it to everyone.

Everybody's constituents have been asking for years for conflict-of-interest rules. We have various conflict-of-interest acts, all of which, I suggest, very few people understand. Even with what there is out there, there are members out in the communities who are afraid even to vote if they happen to be taxpayers or vote if they are businessmen on the main street and the question before the council is commercial designation five or 10 miles away from them; those kinds of things.

I think honourable members of this House need not be faced with conflict-of-interest guidelines such as this. I think it is fair and proper that there should be a system of declaration by the ministers of the crown and parliamentary assistants, but to put every member of this assembly through this hoop if they want to be 100 per cent clean, as somebody has mentioned, I do not think makes sense. I really think that the Premier himself should take this task upon his shoulders and not be sloughing it off to a commissioner whom he and he alone can appoint, as the bill exists at present.

It does not seem to be a very strong bill. I noticed some place here—for instance, in section 12, “After meeting with the member, and with the member’s spouse if the spouse is available....” If the member’s spouse is available; what does that mean? I do not know what it means. I guess it means what it says, but why would—

Mr. Wildman: It’s pretty obvious.

Mr. McCague: That is true. Does that mean if one has one or if she does not have other duties to do that day? What does it really mean? I am not sure what the honourable member’s interpretation of that is, but further down it does mention again, “and by the member’s spouse if the spouse met with the commissioner.” It would seem to

me that all this says is, yes, if there is a spouse and you only meet if you are available to meet. If it is not convenient, so what?

What kind of legislation is that? Either you shall or you must or it should not be in there at all, dispense with it.

I think the bill is unnecessary from the point of the rules that could apply to the private members of this Legislature on all sides of the House and that therefore the government should take a little more time to draft a decent bill or to go back to the references made by the Honourable John Black Aird in his report, and not take this scatter-gun approach to a problem I do not think exists.

1620

Mr. Wildman: I listened carefully to the member’s presentation and I am a little confused, because he seems to be saying two things which sound to me to be contradictory.

They are that, on one hand, the bill is not tough enough, it is kind of a weak bill; but on the other hand, we do not really need legislation, the guideline approach of the former government was better. Perhaps the former minister could clarify those rather contradictory positions.

Mr. Breaugh: I have been sitting here listening intently, into about our third day now of debate on this bill. We are at the stage where, for the last two days, virtually only Tory members have spoken on the bill.

I have tried over this period to determine whether the Tory caucus is going to vote for the bill or against the bill. I have been unable to determine, in two days of avid listening, which way they are going to vote on the bill. It seems to be going too far, but not far enough. Some are for it, some are agin it. Some are going to listen to the remainder of their caucus speak on the bill and then make up their minds.

Would the member do us all a big favour and tell us whether his caucus is in favour of the principle of this bill?

Mr. Philip: It was not clear from listening to the last member: he said at one point, as I understood, that the bill was inadequate. Does that mean he feels the disclosure provisions do not go far enough? Does it mean he feels the commissioner does not have enough powers? If he follows his earlier comment, that somehow all members and all ministers should be honourable gentlemen and therefore there is no need for a commissioner, would he, as a former Chairman of Management Board, take that to its logical conclusion and abolish the role of the independent adjudicator of expenditures—namely, the

Provincial Auditor—on the assumption that all ministers are honest and competent in the operations of their ministries and therefore there would be no need for a Provincial Auditor, either?

Mr. McCague: There were several questions raised and I have the opportunity in the democratic process to speak on my behalf, on behalf of the constituents of Dufferin-Simcoe. That is what I have just done. I was giving you my personal opinion of this bill. I think the guidelines were previously adequate, yes, but they are only adequate if the Premier of the day enforces those guidelines.

I do not see any reason this bill should be extended beyond the executive council and the parliamentary assistants.

As far as how the whole caucus is going to vote, I have not talked to them all. I wished to put my comments on the record; it did not take any longer to put my comments on the record than it did the honourable member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) to raise his point.

Mr. McFadden: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on what is very clearly an important bill, on a subject of great interest not only to members of this Legislature but, I am sure, to people across the province.

I should say that I am sure every member in this House supports the concept that we as members should not become involved in conflicts of interest in the course of our duties as a member of this House, whether as members of the cabinet, as parliamentary assistants, as members on the government side or as members on the opposition side.

I think the voters have a right to expect that those of us who have chosen to work in public service should be beyond question. There should be no suspicion that those of us who hold elected office have questionable morals or are acting in a manner which lacks integrity or honesty. For example, the kind of situation we have seen in the United States with congressmen and senators who have gotten themselves into problems in terms of the carrying out of their responsibilities—the Watergate affair, the recent retirement of Mr. Hart from the race for President of the United States—has had an effect on all of us and has tended to cast a shadow upon everybody in public life.

As well, problems that have occurred in Ottawa, other provinces and this province which have forced ministers to step down from their jobs have reflected badly on the system. In many cases, the charges turn out to be without basis;

some unfortunately do not. When that happens, we are all diminished for a time, at least a little bit, by this kind of allegation and charge.

Bill 23 is quite a sweeping bill in terms of requirements for disclosure. What I would like to ask is, what are the widespread conflicts of interest that this bill is trying to deal with? Are there indications here? Is there proof that large numbers of members of this House either today or in the past have been involved in overt and flagrant conflicts of interest that have in some way damaged the public interest in this province?

I would argue that is totally not the case. In fact, the reverse is the case. We have been fortunate in this province to have had very few conflicts of interest indeed.

Where does this bill then come from? What is the genesis of this bill? The reason we are considering this bill today is that two ministers in the Peterson government were forced to resign under the cloud of conflict of interest. It did not reach out to individual members, either on the government side or on the opposition side. The genesis of this was the resignation of two ministers from the current government.

As a result of that, of course, we have had the report of the standing committee on the legislative assembly dealing with the conflict of interest concerning the member for Cochrane North. We have had the Aird commission report on ministerial compliance with conflict-of-interest guidelines. These reports and this legislation arise from clear problems within the current government.

To begin with, I would argue that setting up a process such as we are proposing to do under Bill 23 is in many ways just window-dressing for the government and a way of deflecting criticism with regard to those two resignations from cabinet. By setting up the process as we are doing under Bill 23, we are reducing the kind of responsibility that correctly lies in the domain of the Premier for the conduct of the members of his cabinet, regardless of what party may be in power. The Premier should be ultimately responsible for conflicts of interest and the disciplining of cabinet ministers and people in authority.

1630

I do not believe it is proper for this House to be, in effect, shifting the responsibility for conflicts of interest of members of cabinet to a commissioner who would then be investigating and deciding whether a minister should continue in the public service or at least within cabinet. It seems to me that the Premier of the day should be responsible for disciplining the government and

his or her ministers. It should be the responsibility of the Premier to ensure disclosure and enforcement of rules among the people whom he or she has appointed to cabinet office.

What I think this bill has done is to try to shift the whole focus away from the Premier, with whom the responsibility for cabinet office should lie, over to a commission. Then the Premier can say: "I have looked after it all. I have created a commission. The commission will look into it." I would suggest this sets a very bad precedent for ministerial responsibility in our government and I would argue that the Premier, by supporting this kind of legislation, is abdicating his responsibility for the standards of conduct of members of his cabinet.

Public disclosure, of course, always sounds like a good thing to do, but I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider the effect that Bill 23 could have on public life in Ontario and the people who are involved in public life.

I think it is safe to say that all members in this House, of every party and from every riding, operate in what is, in effect, a public fish bowl. We all put in 40, 50, 60 or more hours a week in public service, I would argue in general at considerable personal sacrifice in terms of not only income but also family life. There is no member in this House who simply comes to the Legislature, sits here for a few hours and then goes home and sits out in the backyard.

Every member I know in this assembly who is trying to do a good job representing his or her constituents and representing the public interest in this House not only is here when the House is sitting but also is on committees, and on various caucus committees, attends caucus and goes to all kinds of public functions involving his or her responsibilities here in the Legislature. As well, we are involved in attending endless numbers of activities within our own ridings.

In effect, all of us by running for office and securing elective office are involved in a very public way in terms of everything that we do in life, whether it is as a member in this House or in representing the interests of our individual constituents. The question I have to ask is, why do we in Canada not have public disclosure of tax returns? Why is it that everybody cannot see his or her neighbour's tax returns? What is the public interest in keeping all this confidential?

Why do members of this House feel that only members of this House should have disclosure? I would like to know. Maybe we would like to know what policemen get paid and what their deductions are. Why should we not know what

teachers are earning? Maybe professors are making a little too much. Why do we not have disclosure of what professors are making? Why do we not have disclosure of what union bosses are making and all the extras they might be getting? Why do we not have disclosure of what business people get, big and small? Why do we not have disclosure of what all the public service gets?

[Applause]

Mr. McFadden: I hear the members of the New Democratic Party cheering, of course.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You had that kind of legislation and Davis never called it.

Mr. Breagh: That is right.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You introduced it and you backed off.

Mr. McFadden: My point is that in our society we have respected the idea that the individual person has a right to a certain area of privacy. One of the areas of privacy is that of people's assets and financial information. This particular bill would extend the ambit not only to the minister and members of this House but also to their spouses. Does a spouse not have an individual, independent life separate from the member who happens to be holding public office? What about the children as well?

I would suggest that in looking at this bill, we should consider the potential deterrent this kind of legislation will be for many people who may want to enter public life, not because they are seeking to hide anything but because they may want to maintain some sense of privacy in terms of their personal lives.

That might not matter to some members of this House, but I would suggest we have always recognized in this province and in this country that people do have a certain right of privacy. I have no question about the desirability of filing with the Clerk of the House, the Speaker or a commissioner, a statement of assets and income. I would question, though, the propriety of making a family's business totally public to everybody. If we are going to do that, then this bill does not go far enough.

This bill leaves the very false impression that power in this province is totally exercised by members of this Legislature. There is not anything that is more misleading or more misrepresents the facts. The fact is that most discretionary power in Ontario is exercised either by members of cabinet or by deputy ministers and key members of the civil service. I would argue that more power and discretion by far is

exercised on a day-to-day basis by members of the civil service and by various government boards and commissions.

In my view, we should have full disclosure of all deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, department heads and chairmen of all boards and commissions of government, in the same way as of every member of this House, if this bill is to go ahead. I would argue that there is no way that people who are exercising very broad discretionary power in this province should be exempt from this kind of disclosure requirement.

I know I am going to move, when we go into committee, and I think other members of my caucus certainly will, that the ambit of this legislation be broadly extended to include, if this bill is to go through, members of the public service who are involved in decision-making roles.

I would further argue that this should include members of all ministers' staffs, because I would suggest that, in many cases, ministers' staffs have as much authority as members of this Legislature in terms of deciding who has access to ministers, the kind of information ministers receive and the kind of advice ministers get in terms of decisions that are made. So I would suggest that personal staffs of all ministers should also be required to conform with this bill.

I think the principle we should be following in this kind of legislation is that anybody who exercises power, either under legislation to pass law or discretionary power in government, should have the same disclosure requirements apply.

I do not know what the government's attitude would be on this, but I think that if we are proposing to go ahead with this bill, then we have to take in more than members of this House. As a consequence, I would suggest that, while I have no objection to this bill proceeding in terms of committee consideration so that we can get into some of these details, I do think this House should be mindful of where we are heading.

We should be mindful of the impact this will have in terms of members' families. We should be mindful in terms of the impact this will have on people who might be seeking public office. We should also be mindful in terms of the kind of disclosure we would have to have for everybody connected with the public service if we go ahead with this legislation at all.

1640

It is unfortunate that we have today in this province and in this country, and probably generally in other countries, the kind of suspicion

about motives and approaches this bill would indicate people have. I am not questioning that. I think there are many people in our society who think members of this House become rich sitting here and serving in this assembly. I do not know of any person who is either currently in this House or has served in this House who has ever become rich through public service.

I believe the people who stand for office and who serve in this Legislature almost unanimously come here with the best of motives, with the idea of being here in the public service. It is unfortunate that we are in a situation today where we will not accept, and probably cannot accept, people's word at face value. It is unfortunate our society has reached the point where we have to be in a situation where we cannot accept the word of somebody or the benefit of doubt until it is proved.

Mr. Laughren: You did not take the word of the member for Oriole.

Mr. McFadden: With good reason.

I think what has happened here is that we have got ourselves into a spot where as a result of two instances that have happened over the past 12 months, we are getting into a whole train of events that will affect public life for some time to come. I think it is unfortunate we have had to move on to this road. We now are on it, but I think all members should address very seriously the implications of what we are doing and the logical impact of what we are about today.

Mr. Philip: I have a number of questions. First, if somehow it was only the present government that brought on the need for this legislation, why was it that things were so bad under the previous government that it was necessary for Premier Davis to bring in new conflict-of-interest guidelines? Obviously, if there was no conflict of interest, those guidelines were not needed.

Second, the member has said the public has the right to expect a high level of conduct. If they can expect a high level of conduct of ministers, why should they not equally be able to expect an impartial adjudication of that high level of conduct?

Third, the members of the Conservative Party on the public accounts committee that looked into the inquiry of the member for Oriole and her husband expressed over and over again that it was not the forum. Indeed, I believe the member for Brantford reiterated that in his earlier speech on this bill. If that is not the forum and one does need some other form of adjudication where there is an alleged conflict, what process does

one use if one does not use the kind of independent adjudication proposed in the bill?

Last, is it my understanding that if the bill is extended to other public servants who act in a discretionary manner in the use of public funds, if that amendment is posed and passed in this bill, would it then be the position of the member that he could accept and vote for this bill?

Mr. Wildman: I have listened very carefully. I think the last speaker made the Conservative position clear; a little clearer at least. It seems to be that we do not need this legislation but if we are going to have it, it does not go far enough.

I am a little confused about the presentation made by the member. He seemed to be saying that spouses of members of the executive council should have some privacy when, as I recall, it was members of his own caucus who in dealing with the case of the member for Oriole argued that the business of her husband was a public matter and a matter for public debate and something that should be a matter for control because she was a member of the executive council. If my understanding is not correct, I would appreciate if the member would correct me.

Mr. Breagh: I want to pursue just a little bit the question I raised earlier. I have been listening attentively for two days now for some indication as to whether the Tory caucus will vote for or against this bill. It is becoming a very difficult task to determine which way they are going to fall on this issue. I understand their discomfort with the disclosure provisions, but I would remind them they went to great lengths last summer at about this same time, demanding full and complete disclosure on the part of members of the cabinet. It does not sit too nicely that they would argue so ferociously here today against the same disclosure provisions.

I would just make one final plea. If the Tories do not want to disclose their financial transactions, would they please disclose which way they are going to vote on second reading of this bill?

Mr. Speaker: Are you accusing some members of being ferocious?

Any other comments or questions? The member for Eglinton may wish to respond for up to two minutes.

Mr. McFadden: I take it the members would like me to give a whole new address here to cover all these points. Let us just deal with some of the matters. I have disclosed my particular views on this. Dealing with the question of privacy, I have not argued that ministers or their spouses should not provide the information required in this

legislation to the Premier or to an independent commissioner. I have not argued that. I think there should be a full and complete disclosure.

Mr. Breagh: Now that we know what you have not argued, will you tell us what you have argued?

Mr. McFadden: Does the member want me to repeat my speech? I only have two minutes to do this.

What I am arguing is that there is nothing wrong with there being a disclosure to a commissioner. I would prefer to see the Premier, through his office or through the secretary of cabinet, enforce the guidelines on the ministers but, if that is not to be the case, I see nothing wrong with the disclosure of it to a commissioner or a commission. My point is that I see no public interest necessarily in having this published—certainly as far as spouses are concerned—in the daily press.

I think the questions we raised last year were instances where we found conflicts of interest. In that case, where on the public record it became clear there were conflicts of interest, then there should be some answering and disclosure in this House or an appropriate forum. As far as hearings before a legislative committee are concerned, perhaps legislative committees are not the appropriate vehicle to be investigating ministers and conflict of interest.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

Mr. McFadden: I would have been happy to have gone on for some further time.

Mr. Ward: I have just a few brief wind-down comments. I have listened with interest to the comments many of the members have offered and I do want to assure the members of the Legislature that as this bill proceeds through committee we can explore some of those points in much greater detail.

I was particularly interested in the suggestion by the member for Eglinton that perhaps the bill should be extended to include members of the civil service who do have some statutory authority. That is an issue we can hopefully delve into further as the bill proceeds through, I believe, the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

In closing, I believe that we as legislators, as well as the general public, are much better served by having in place legislation that clearly will help all our citizens, and indeed the members, to establish greater confidence in the knowledge that members do not profit in a personal way by

either their knowledge or their activities as members of this Legislature. I think this legislation greatly enhances the clarity and understanding all of us will have with regard to our obligations.

1650

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Bill ordered for standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

Le projet de loi est déferé au comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITIES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Regional Municipalities.

L'hon. M. Grandmaître: Ce projet de loi apportera plusieurs amendements aux règlements établis pour les municipalités régionales. Il permettra, par exemple, à chaque conseil régional de disposer du pouvoir bien défini pour fluoriser son eau potable. Il aura également pour effet d'assujettir chaque conseil régional de l'article 112 de la Loi sur les municipalités, qui interdit aux conseils municipaux d'accorder des primes à des entreprises commerciales.

This legislation will also make several amendments to individual regional statutes. For example, it will permit the Ottawa-Carleton regional council to establish a day care service area and to set up a 911 emergency response system for the benefit of the residents of the entire region.

Mr. McCague: I realize it is difficult to get an acknowledgement from the minister on second reading, but I presume everything mentioned in Bill 7 was asked for by the regional municipalities. The minister has indicated that is true and that the sections regarding fluoridation, court orders for support of juveniles, transfer of municipal materials to the archivists and prohibition of bonuses are applicable to all acts. On the trust fund accounts for homes for the aged in the various regions, I would have liked to have known how big an item those are but was not able to determine what they are at the present time.

The sections dealing with the permanent encroachments in Hamilton-Wentworth over and under regional roads and the Hamilton Civic Hospital seem to make sense. For Ottawa-Carleton, the minister's own region, he mentioned day care services and 911 emergency but did not mention the commercial park and drive which I understand forms part of this bill.

One point I noticed in going through this—I must admit I have had a chance to look at this only in the last couple of days. In relation to the transfer of municipal material to provincial archivists, I have not yet been able to locate Bill 179, which I understand is a bill that either has or is yet to be dealt with by this House for all other municipalities. In other words, the minister does not want the regions to have the power to send certain things to the archivists—the regulations, rules or whatever it is—prior to Bill 179 being adopted by this House. I must admit that could have happened and I missed it, but I could not find the bill as I was looking for it this morning.

I think we all agree with the prohibition of bonuses. I guess that is an extension of the discussion we have been having on Bill 34 in the past few days. We certainly will be supporting this bill. I asked the minister a couple of questions he may wish to respond to as he makes any further comments.

I think that is all I wish to say. We endorse the bill and would like the minister to answer those points.

Mr. Breaugh: We will support the bill. The only hesitation I have is that I put to the minister that the bill causes some problems in coming forward in this form. It is traditional that usually about once a year we do an omnibus bill that reflects requests from regional municipalities for changes to their legislation. We have tried to canvass each of the regions. We have uncovered a couple of occasions when there was a little difference of opinion over language, but that seems to have been resolved.

I guess this is an example of an occasion when the omnibus bill—putting all the requests from all the regions in one bill—can be dealt with fairly expeditiously, but on other occasions there has been a certain awkwardness when there was something a little more, shall we say, contentious contained in the bill. It may apply to only one of the regions but it then becomes difficult to separate out that section.

I will make my annual plea that the minister give some consideration to putting these requested changes in regional municipal legislation in a somewhat different form so we can separate out parts of it if there are objections. On this one, as best I can determine by talking to people who are on the regional councils or working in the clerks' offices in the various regions, this simply conforms to the requests that have been made by regional councils over the years.

The other difficulty I have is that a somewhat more comprehensive compendium, which is

supposed to come with this bill, would resolve the problem. For example, I am sure ministry staff contact each of the regions and try to respond to requests from the councils for changes in their particular legislation. When the minister introduces a bill, we have to do much the same thing as opposition critics. We have to track these people down and try to get from them: "What was the original request? Does the current bill respond to the needs as your council identified them?"

It seems to me that a little more openness in the process would resolve any difficulties people have; that is to say, if the minister would provide us with a comprehensive background paper that establishes, for example, that this is when the region of Durham made this request. "Here is the motion of the council that did that. Here is our response. Here are some suggestions they made."

In this instance, to use Durham as an example, when we called the clerk's office, staff made us aware that they had corresponded with the ministry over a very slight wording change that was proposed in the section of the bill dealing with the region of Durham. It took a little tracking down but we found out that in fact the ministry had responded to their request. Different people have been doing the negotiating, so to speak, and the region of Durham now is satisfied with the wording of the bill as is.

It took a little hustling around to determine that. I think it would be advisable in future years for the minister to find a slightly different format, or if that is not possible and he wants to stick with the omnibus bill format, then at least to try to provide the opposition critics with a little more comprehensive background information. In this instance it is apparent, to me anyway, that there is nothing untoward here. The ministry has responded to requests from various municipalities to make slight alterations to the acts that govern them.

It would have been a much easier and simpler task—I am sure the minister already has the information—if he had given us that background when he tabled the bill. It would have resolved it. At any rate, we are happy to support the bill.

1700

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: In answer to some of the questions from the member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. McCague), I can assure the member that the regional solicitor was consulted and the changes or amendments have been approved by all regions. I think his second question was on the size of the trust fund surpluses. I cannot give him

an exact figure but I can assure him that it is in the millions of dollars. If he would like an exact figure, I can provide him with it.

With respect to the transfer of municipal material to the provincial archivist, I can assure the member that this needed amendment—at the present time, as the member knows, the Municipal Act provides for municipalities to transfer these documents or materials, any materials pertaining to meetings or minutes, but an amendment was needed to amend the regional acts. That is the reason this amendment is being proposed.

I agree with the member for Oshawa. We were on a very tight schedule and that is why this bill encompasses quite a number of amendments. I would have preferred to provide single bills for each item. Maybe the next time around in the fall session I will do this. I will provide my critics with more information. They are always welcome to phone me in the meantime. Until we get on a regular schedule of doing business in the House, I will try to keep the House informed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

WINE CONTENT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Offer moved, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Kwinter, second reading of Bill 25, An Act to amend the Wine Content Act.

Mr. Offer: The purpose of this act is to extend existing legislation for a period of one year, which allows the limited use of non-Ontario grapes and wine in Ontario wine production. The regulations currently in effect allow imported grapes or the equivalent in the form of grape juice or concentrate to be blended with domestic wines to a limit of 15 per cent of a winery's total grape purchases or 30 per cent of the content of any individual brand of wine.

During the 1970s, consumer demand for wine increased but the trend was away from the stronger, sweeter taste that then dominated Ontario products towards a drier, lighter taste. Ontario wineries needed assistance to tackle this new market. Accordingly, the Wine Content Act was passed in 1976 to give the wineries the ability to meet these changing consumer tastes while conversion of the grape crop took place. Conversion of grape crops from the traditional labrusca variety to vinifera and hybrid varieties was originally estimated to have taken four to seven years. The conversion process has taken longer than expected.

Prior to this enabling legislation, the use of non-Ontario grapes had been banned under the

Liquor Control Act. The Wine Content Act had an original sunset date of 1980 but it was extended to 1984 and again to 1986. This one-year extension will permit the continuation of the conversion process while assisting the wineries in their production planning. This initiative has the backing of both the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board and the Wine Council of Ontario. It is part of a strategic plan being developed by both our government and the industry and is aimed at making the domestic wine industry stronger and more competitive.

I can assure the House that regulations can still be altered at any time in the process if the wineries and grape growers arrange a joint agreement on such changes.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes).

Mr. Haggerty: You have a conflict of interest, Phil.

Mr. Andrewes: The member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty) suggests I might have a conflict of interest. Let me assure him that I do not under the proposed act on this matter.

I want to comment briefly on this momentous occasion as we once again deal with the Wine Content Amendment Act as it comes up for its annual review before the House. I am sure those who are watching from the galleries and on television cannot wait for this momentous occasion when we give second reading to the Wine Content Amendment Act.

The member for Erie suggested I might have a conflict because about half, perhaps a little more than half of the growers who produce grapes for Ontario wine live in my constituency. If representing my constituents, a number of whom are also in the business of making wine, gives me a conflict here, it is one I quite enjoy having.

The parliamentary assistant has outlined, I think fairly carefully, the history of the Wine Content Act. In this ideal world we all seek, it would be most appropriate to have Ontario wines contain all-Ontario grape product. This, of course, is difficult because consumers' tastes change from time to time and unfortunately the growth and rejuvenation of vineyards cannot keep pace with those changing tastes.

A scheme was devised whereby wineries would be allowed to blend product from off-shore, whether in the form of wine, juice or grapes, with the Ontario product to enhance the overall quality, aiming of course for that ideal situation when Ontario wines would contain nothing but Ontario grapes.

The statute has an annual sunset clause, which is appropriate because it gives this Legislature and the industry an annual opportunity to assess the need for the continuation of the act and to assess the need for the regulations that might be drawn under it.

This is an industry in transition. The growers who are planting these vines and who are investing their money in the future must make those changes to keep up to date on new varieties and varieties that will allow wineries to produce the product to meet the changing consumers' tastes. For the wineries, the transition is more in marketing style and production style and in the development of improved and enhanced quality that will make them even more competitive than they already are with many wine-producing jurisdictions around the world.

Both sectors, the growers and the wineries, must deal specifically with a very strong mindset that the public of this province, the public of Canada generally and the public of the world has towards something we know as Ontario wines. There is perhaps nothing more snobbish than people's attitudes towards wine.

If it carries a label "Product of France" or "Product of Italy" or product of some other place, in many people's view it is better. Even before the cork is pulled and the first waft is taken and the first sip meets the palate, people have reached conclusions based on a mindset that has become a very serious and severe challenge for both the growers and the wineries of this province. Indeed, that mindset was perhaps the reason why the province, the government of Ontario, at its international pavilion at the world's fair last summer, encouraged the sale of wines from California as well as the wines of Ontario. Perhaps they were not convinced that this province produced as good a wine as any other jurisdiction, and in its world-class fair, in its world-class pavilion, the Liberal government of the province sold California wine. Shame on it.

1710

That same mindset is very prevalent with the people's airline, Air Canada, which continues to insist that its passengers do not have enough respect for Ontario-produced products to serve them exclusively on domestic flights, on inter-continental flights, no matter where that airline travels; that its clients do not have the discretion to say, "Canadian, Ontario only."

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, if it were Air France, you would not find anything but French wines. If it were Alitalia, you would not find anything but Italian wines. If it were Lufthansa, you would not

find anything but German wines. You agree; I agree; I am sure the government agrees.

Coming back to the statute that is before us, this momentous statute, Bill 25, I think we always have concerns that when we review this statute on an annual basis, the discussions have taken place between the wineries and the growers and there is a clear consensus that the wineries respect the investment that growers have made in growing these newer varieties, in attempting to meet the changing marketplace, and that in respecting that investment, the wineries will do their best to purchase all of the products, all of the grapes produced by those growers, in an attempt to parallel the efforts the growers are making on behalf of the consumer. In an ideal world, of course, we would not be faced with surplus commodities, but in agriculture today we are, and the grape industry is no exception to that.

Clearly, where there are growers who have undertaken to change their style of operation, to change the varieties they are growing away from the traditional varieties to meet those changing consumer tastes, those efforts must be respected by the wineries and those grapes must be purchased before they reach outside of Ontario's boundaries for additional product.

As we move to that end, I would of course encourage all members to support Bill 25.

Mr. Swart: I am sure this bill will get the unanimous support of the House. The same thing has been before us for quite a number of years and has received the support of all parties before, and I am sure it will again today.

As a matter of fact, I and other people from the Niagara area were involved in this matter when it was first proposed that the quality of Ontario wine could perhaps be improved if there was permission for imported grapes or imported wine to be mixed, within certain limits, with our local wines, and it received all-party approval in its very early stages.

I suspect that the member for Lincoln mentioned this when he was speaking. I was not in the House all the time, but there probably is the likelihood within the next year or two or three that this kind of legislation will no longer be necessary, that in fact in Niagara we will be producing the variety of grapes that is now imported, or a variety so close to it that it will no longer be necessary to have those grapes, concentrates or wines imported. We look forward to that time.

Although this bill will receive unanimous approval and will not be controversial, I think all of us who live in Niagara recognize that the grape

industry and the grape growers are in very substantial difficulty, as many other segments of agriculture are. Therefore, not only do we have to pass this legislation so that we will continue to have the kind of quality wine that will sell not only in this province but elsewhere, but also we have to look for other measures to improve the sales of Ontario wines.

I know there have been more commissions on this than on almost any other sector of our agricultural industry. I believe there is another one sitting at the present time. There has been some controversy between the Canadian Wine Institute and the farmers with regard to the measures that should be taken, even though their goals are basically the same, one with the other. We look forward to that task force reporting some time in the not-too-distant future.

Interjection.

Mr. Swart: People from the rocky north interject on subjects like the wine industry. I suppose in some respects they may know more about it from one end of it than a lot of the rest of us, but on the production end perhaps they should not interject in any great way, because of lack of knowledge.

There is now a goal of both the industry and the grape growers that at least 55 per cent of the market for wine in Ontario should be reserved for Ontario wines. We were almost up to that point back in the early 1980s, when there was legislation on the books of this province which gave some special price advantage to the locally grown wines, but as we know, the Conservative government abolished that legislation. In fairness to them, or at least that procedure, there probably would have been difficulties under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade if it had not been changed.

The result has been that the consumption of Ontario wines in this province has dropped to about 42 per cent at the present time. In fact, that is up a little bit over what it was a year ago.

It is not only the grape growers who have suffered fairly substantially in recent times, but also those who work in the wineries. Partly because of the reduction in sales and partly because of one winery buying out another, there have been rather serious layoffs down in the Niagara Peninsula, certainly at Jordan wines. With Brights Foods buying out Jordan, it has more capacity than it needs, and therefore it is cutting back on one of the wineries and has laid off quite a number of people.

The final thing I want to mention while we are talking about this matter is the concern the grape

growers and the wine industry have with regard to free trade. There is every reason to believe that if free trade becomes a reality and there is free trade, there will be no wine industry left in this province.

1720

Mr. Haggerty: There has to be fair trade.

Mr. Swart: "Fair trade" is a nice phrase, but I am sure I do not know what it means.

In any event, it makes me feel even more strongly that the New Democratic Party, both federally and provincially, has been taking the right position on free trade: to be very suspicious of it and basically be in opposition to it in principle. This is certainly the position the grape growers and the wineries would like to see in place in this nation; in other words, to ensure that free trade does not proceed, at least in their area, or it will likely be the end or close to the end of the wine industry in Niagara.

It is a long way around to the bill we have in front of us, but it does point out the rather difficult situation which the wine industry and the grape growers in the Niagara Peninsula are in, and the need that this bill be passed at this time so that, in some small measure, it will at least continue the quality of our wine so we can compete in the local and in the international markets with some degree of equality.

My party and I will be supporting this.

Mr. McGuigan: I want to take this opportunity to join colleagues from wine-producing areas to give my support to this bill.

Mention was made of conflict of interest. I am an unabashed wine grower, and I use that term advisedly. Rather than a grape grower, I am a wine grower, because wines are made in the vineyard. It is the variety of grape, the high sugar content and the low acid content, that makes the wine. Admittedly, a poor vintner could take a good grape juice and make a bad job of it, but the best vintner in the world cannot take a poor juice and make a classic wine. So wine is made in the field.

As has already been pointed out, in the old days we grew rather cheap varieties of vines and varieties that did well in our climate. But in the last number of years, we have imported hybrid varieties of vines from France and these are now adapted to our climate. They are doing very well and are producing varietal wines. That is a wine where the juice all comes from a single variety. Of course, that is what people recognize when they want this variety, that variety, and so on. You get classic, top-quality wines from varietal wines; not from mixtures. You may get a

passable product, but certainly not a classic product from a mixture. This bill addresses itself to mixtures.

As a matter of history, I want to mention in passing that the wine industry in Ontario actually began in Kent and Essex counties. More than 100 years ago, there were grapevines and wineries over on Pelee Island and along that ridge from Leamington to Blenheim. As a matter of fact, in the little village I live in, Cedar Springs, there is an old building with a very deep basement, far deeper than you would use for any storing of a farm product. When I was a kid, I was always told this building had that very deep basement because of the fact that at one time it was a winery, a place to store wine. They made wine and they stored it there.

As tobacco blossomed in this country at the time of the First World War, the tobacco lands took over the grape lands and growers moved to the Niagara Peninsula, which is another beautiful area for growing grapes. The land there has been getting crowded through mistakes of the past government in allowing those fruit lands to be taken over, building the Queen Elizabeth Way right through some of the very best part of it and allowing those irreplaceable lands to be taken over. The industry is now drifting back to Kent and Essex counties and the wineries there are producing some award-winning vintages. Charal Winery and Vineyards near where I live at Cedar Springs has won a number of gold medal awards for its wines, and the other wineries also have very high reputations.

I want to thank members for listening to this little bit of history, but I wanted to bring up the fact that the wine industry started in southwestern Ontario and it looks to be coming back there.

Mr. Ashe: Very briefly, I appreciate all of the remarks by the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan) and I think he should be very willing to bring in some of the products from his area so that we can sample some of them. I know they are excellent—I happen to buy them from time to time—but I think he should share that excellence with 123 of his colleagues.

Mr. McGuigan: It might bring a charge of conflict of interest if we did that. I think I will fall back on the conflict and will decline the member's very generous offer.

Mr. Partington: I am pleased to join in the debate in support of the act, which extends the thrust of the Wine Content Act for a period of one year and which is supported by the grape and wine industry, I am pleased to see. I am pleased to speak on this matter, being the representative

of Brock which, along with the riding of Lincoln, does represent the majority of the grape-growing area and the majority of the wineries in Ontario.

The wine industry is important for several reasons, first of all to the economy of Ontario. There are some 1,500 people employed directly in the Ontario wine industry. Two thousand Ontario families as well as some 14,000 seasonal workers depend on grape-growing.

In addition to that, I think the wine industry is important to Ontario because of the very high quality product that is produced. The Ontario wine industry has served the needs of Ontarians well in years past and continues to do so. The products that are now being produced, as the member for Kent-Elgin has indicated, are of an award-winning variety and certainly rate equally with the best of wines produced anywhere in the world. It is a quality product and one that we hope will soon be more readily recognized in our own province and in our own country because clearly, on a product basis, it is nothing but first class.

In speaking in support of this act, which is an act that supports and promotes the grape and wine industry, I applaud the government. I would hope, though, that the government would continue its support of the grape and wine industry in many more positive ways. Clearly, as the standing committee on finance and economic affairs in its report to the Treasurer urged, the government should continue to promote the Ontario wine industry. In particular, in the use of wine products in wine tastings where there is no revenue accruing to the wineries, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) of the province should lift the tax that is now payable in that connection.

I would hope that following the extension of this act to amend the Wine Content Act, the government will go further in promoting the wine industry by taking that step. Further, I hope that the government soon clearly comes out with a position with respect to the Ontario wine industry task force report submitted by the Wine Council of Ontario. There are certain other initiatives that should be taken by the government in support of the grape and wine industry: the elimination of the freeze on winery operated mini-stores, permitting retail stores to sell additional wine-related items including prepackaged foods, and there are many other steps the government should be taking.

An hon. member: It keeps the whine in wine.

1730

Mr. Partington: Pardon?

An hon. member: It keeps the whine in wine.

Mr. Partington: I just mentioned sampling without tax a few minutes ago, but clearly there are many initiatives that we look forward to having this government introduce in the near future so that the quality and growth of the industry can continue. Clearly, as the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) was pointing out, the market share of the wine industry in Ontario has shrunk over the past few years to something like 38 per cent in the past year. Clearly, with the commitment that has been made by the grape growers of this province, the commitment of the wine industry and the tremendously high quality product that is being produced, it is essential that this Legislature and the government support and promote the Ontario wine industry.

Mr. Offer: I would like to thank all the honourable members for their support of this bill. It seems there were two concerns that were brought forward. One is with respect to competition; and that in time legislation might no longer be necessary because of the growing ability to meet consumer demands and taste.

Once more, I would like to reiterate that the conversion of the grape crop from the traditional labrusca variety to vinifera and hybrid variety was originally estimated to take four to seven years and the conversion process has taken longer than expected, which requires and necessitates the extension of this particular act.

With respect to competition, it is important to note that there is a steering committee on the competitiveness of Ontario's beverage alcohol industries, which is co-chaired by the ministries of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Agriculture and Food, which is in consultation with the Wine Council of Ontario and the Grape Growers' Marketing Board. An objective of this committee is the development of a long-term strategic plan with respect to the wine and grape industry and competitiveness and trade issues.

A limited extension of the Wine Content Act will enable the government to determine an appropriate role or lifespan of the act in the context of a broader strategic plan.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved second reading of Bill 62, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This bill implements the proposals contained in the budget of May 20,

1987, as well as some administrative amendments.

The exemption level for prepared food products will be increased from \$2 to \$4 effective yesterday, June 1, 1987.

The bill provides for the adoption of phraseology recommended by the secretariat for disabled persons for references to persons with physical disabilities.

The bill also includes amendments providing for other administrative housekeeping changes.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I have just a couple of questions pertaining to subsection 30(1a) of the act, as set out in subsection 6(2) of the bill, a penalty for default in remitting tax. I would like to ask you first what the change is; and then I would like to point out that most of the people who collect the tax are unwilling tax collectors. They do not have much choice in it. The government does pay them a small amount for their duties, but they are supposed to remit by the 23rd of the month. On some occasions, they inadvertently forget the date. It slides by and then they are faced at that time with a penalty that could be up to \$1,000 for every vendor who fails to remit with his or her return the amount of taxes collected. Is it if they deliberately fail to remit it or if they inadvertently miss it by two, three, five days?

I am concerned about the time element, about the fact that if a tax collector, if a merchant fails because maybe he does not have enough staff or does not have staff trained specifically for tax collecting and tax remitting like a large store, some of these small merchants may miss the deadline. Then are they subject to this penalty?

The time frame is one thing I would like to inquire about; and also, in the event that there is a penalty for a late filing, is there any notification that is sent out by the ministry before the penalty is evoked? Are they warned that they have missed the date by registered letter or something of this nature; because as we know, the mail sometimes does go astray? I realize ignorance of the law is no excuse, and if they are to file by the 23rd they must do so; but is there just a reminder rather than a penalty?

Mr. Harris: I want to ask about the same section, in the hope that the Treasurer will answer the questions as to what is the situation right now vis-à-vis the penalty for late filing or for late failure to pay.

The section says "who fails to remit" taxes payable as shown on the vendor's return. Does that mean that if he sends the return in but does not have the money to pay, then he is subject to

the fine, or if he is late filing? I think there is an interpretation there that I am not too sure of. I hope the Treasurer will tell us what it is now and maybe clarify that little point on those two things.

I also want to express a little bit of concern, and maybe the Treasurer can tell me the reason for what appears to be a fairly hefty penalty, 10 per cent. If a guy is three days late paying his money, that works out, I guess, to somewhere in the order of 3,000 per cent interest. As has been pointed out by the member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel (Mr. J. M. Johnson), this is not like many government levies and fees.

It is admittedly the taxpayers' money and it is collected by vendors, but they have no choice. They are ordered to be tax collectors for the government. Many of them will question whether in fact it is worth while with the initiative that is there.

Mr. Laughren: Wasn't that a Tory initiative? Who introduced the sales tax?

Mr. Harris: I do not think what I am questioning is a Tory initiative. I am wondering why, when an income tax it is the going rate of interest if you are a little late paying, while this one could be 100 per cent or 1,000 per cent. Maybe the Treasurer would clarify that.

Mr. Barlow: My question is on exactly the same point as has already been discussed. I have done a fair bit of research here on the custom in a situation like this. In 1983 in the Statutes of Ontario, there was an amendment made to change the levy of assessment from five per cent to 10 per cent. This amendment says it is going to be 10 per cent. Also, an amendment was made to strike out \$500 and insert in lieu thereof \$1,000. Now, with this amendment, as I can see it, we are striking out some words in one section and adding a brand new section.

Why the play on words? Why change all these words around? It seems to me the act already covers 10 per cent up to \$1,000 and \$1,000 for anything over \$10,000 in the tax collected. Perhaps the Treasurer can roll all these queries into one big answer and clear up all the concerns we have.

Mr. Foulds: I doubt it.

1740

Mr. Ashe: Again, on the same section, it would appear that the Treasurer might have better spent his time when he moved second reading to explain this section, because obviously it is seems a little redundant, if not unclear. My concern and question is exactly the same.

Hopefully, we have given him lots of opportunity to think through the answer now.

As I understand that section, there is really no change whatsoever in the penalties, but it seems to be a duplication, splitting out as to when, why and under what circumstances any penalty—the 10 per cent with the maximum of \$1,000, which has already been in effect since 1983—is payable. I repeat the concerns and question as posed by my colleague the member for Cambridge (Mr. Barlow) as to what the Treasurer is doing. The present act talks about those who do not remit the file and the money, and now he is adding a separate subsection that talks about not remitting the money with the return. It sounds like a duplication. Normally, when we make amendments, we are clarifying and simplifying. It is very difficult to see how this particular amendment does either.

The Deputy Speaker: Reply?

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, there are another 32. Has the time expired for questions and comments? Thank you. Reply from the minister.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, frankly, I was not aware that this little procedure worked on the opening statement on a bill, but you are telling me that it does. We are having the whole debate in these 90-second intervals, and that suits me to a T.

The reason for the change is that the interpretation of the old penalty act was that if you were short by a certain amount during the payback period, the monthly pay-in, you were subject to 10 per cent on the whole amount of the payment that was due, including what you had already sent in. I am sorry, I am not phrasing that very well. With this amendment, you are subject to a 10 per cent penalty up to a maximum of \$1,000 on only that amount by which you are short. I think there have been a number of instances where under the act a 10 per cent penalty would be applied on a fairly large amount of money when only a few dollars were short under the assessment. That is the explanation for the change, which is designed to really be of benefit to the collector of the tax.

I have 52 seconds to refer to what the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) said about the vendors being unwilling tax collectors. Certainly that is true. When I was first elected, this was the big issue. Mr. Frost, in the budget that year, had brought in the three per cent sales tax. It was considered a very high sales tax indeed. I know he was very politically sensitive about the matter. There are those who say he decided to end his

career as Premier at that stage, taking what he considered to be the blame, even though because of very good judgement the Liberal leader of the day had recommended he put the tax on. That is another story which we can discuss when I have more than 13 seconds.

Anyway, the vendors are unwilling in that connection, but we reimburse them for their efforts; not sufficiently, but higher than any other sales tax collection jurisdiction in Canada.

Mr. Laughren: I shall be brief, even though I must say we on this side welcome and have been looking forward for some time to this cornerstone of the Treasurer's fiscal policy for Ontario.

We have no trouble supporting the increase in the exemption from \$2 to \$4 for prepared food. I think the change in the wording for the physically handicapped is an appropriate one and we support that. We are a little concerned about his anti-post office amendment in section 3, but I suppose we can live with that.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We have so much staff.

Mr. Laughren: I know; they dream up these things. Even though this cornerstone of fiscal policy does not deal with some of the issues we would like to see the Treasurer deal with in the province, we will support it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: May I just comment, since the member for Nickel Belt is the first honourable member who raised the actual subject matter of this bill, which was increasing the exemption on prepared food to \$4, that I join him in congratulating the Treasurer for putting that in the budget this year.

This was a commitment made by the Liberal Party before the election that saw our accession to the responsibility of office. This really means that almost all our commitments have been kept. There are one or two we are still working on that are not of a minor nature and may take another budget or two to accomplish, if the good Lord gives us that opportunity.

I was really delighted that the exemption was raised to \$4. Mr. Cohon himself, the owner of McDonald's hamburger stands, indicated he felt it was a sensitive move. I thought that was a very appropriate way to describe it. I was also glad to see in the newspapers today a picture of a kind of sandwich-board sign in front of a restaurant headed, "Bob Nixon's Specials." Here were these full meals for \$3.99, and I think it is really quite a remarkable thing that this has been able to occur in this jurisdiction and under these times. I believe the overall cost for this change was \$40 million.

Mr. Laughren: I do not want to prolong the debate, but it really is strange in this province that the former Treasurer—I do not know whether the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) was ever Minister of Revenue, but he was Treasurer—got his inspiration by jogging past used car lots and the present Treasurer gets his from jogging past McDonald's hamburger stands.

Mr. Ashe: We will, of course, be supporting this bill. If we really want to call the Treasurer benevolent—he thinks he should be called benevolent—maybe he should have gone a little step farther. We used to call him Buck-a-Year Bob on his first budget and Another-Buck-a-Year Bob on his second budget.

He jumped two bucks this year, maybe coincidentally, because it is about the only election promise that will have been fulfilled. Besides that, just coincidentally, it might be an election year. He will be able to stand up and say, "We did at least one thing we said we were going to do without the prompting of the third party."

One can say that is a great revelation, but I am not quite sure it is. If he really wants to go down in history, or on more sign boards, what he should do is suggest that when two or three people sit down in a restaurant, they should be able to say that it is fine, as long as it is divisible by two or three; it could be a \$4 maximum, \$8 maximum, \$12 maximum and so on. I would suggest that Mr. Cohon at McDonald's, when he sees the lineups getting longer as everybody goes to buy his own hot dog or hamburger and chips, etc., to be able to stay under the \$3.99 limit, may not be as thankful as he has been in the past.

The last comment I have to make is on the section the Treasurer just responded to, namely, section 30: in fact, maybe in his ultimate response he can answer why subsection (1a) has been added rather than replacing the present subsection 30(1) in the bill. If one reads them one after the other, it is hard to know why both are needed and why this one does not just replace the one that exists.

I appreciate and accept his explanation about the confusion before, vis-à-vis they were subject possibly to a penalty on the total tax rather than just the tax not remitted. It seems to me that the present subsection 30(1), then, is rather redundant, and that this section would take care of both situations of not remitting or not remitting all of it. Possibly the Treasurer can ponder that over the next month or two and respond in due course.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If I may just respond, it might save a moment or two. I really cannot give the member the kind of answer he would expect.

My own experience is that the legal advice in the ministry is excellent and quite precise, and the member knows the same. They are the same well-qualified people who kept him out of trouble who so far have kept me out of trouble. The answer is that we did that because it seemed the advisable thing to do. I will provide him with a written answer, however, as soon as that is available.

Mr. Ashe: I appreciate the offer of the Treasurer to provide a more adequate explanation in due course and I thank him.

1750

Mr. Swart: There is just one item that I want to bring to the Treasurer's attention. I first brought it to his attention over a year ago, by writing a letter to him about the discrimination that exists with regard to kiddies' treats. I hoped, especially as he wrote back to me a year ago saying that it seemed to make some sense and that he would review it, that perhaps the budget this year would contain at least a dollar exemption for those kinds of treats, whether it be chocolate bars or whether it be ice cream that is sold by Dickie Dee and those kinds of things.

I see he decided not to do that and I think it was a mistake. I do not know whether it is because he does not eat those kinds of fattening treats himself or whether he has not got children or grandchildren who like those things. Whatever the reason is, perhaps he would like to advise us at this time, because it does seem to be a bit unfair that the tax, which was put on by the people on the right since I was here, has not been lifted by the new government, especially when it has now raised the exemption on prepared foods to \$4.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Dickie Dee has not come that far out of the peninsula that it has had an impact in Brant county. My grandchildren like Dairy Queen, and we may specifically exempt Dairy Queen in the near future. I should also say that I tend, when I respond to the honourable member's letter—I feel so good about it because his picture is on each letter. Here is this smiling face, and I always say, "Dear Mel, nice to see your picture and we'll think about it positively." And I still am.

Mr. Foulds: The Treasurer has shown his complete ignorance of the whole issue surrounding the Dickie Dee controversy, in confusing it with Dairy Queen. Dickie Dee is on the little bicycles and carts that go around from place to place, and the argument made is that the work that is involved in selling the wares by lifting it up, even though it is prepared food, makes it

actually as work-motivated and work-producing as is the production of a scoop of ice cream, which is a prepared food and thus exempt.

I would ask the Treasurer to pay some serious attention to the comments of my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold who put the case properly, I think. The Treasurer should also be aware that Dickie Dee has expanded westward from the peninsula into ridings vulnerable to Liberals, such as that held by his colleague the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke), the chairman of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, who especially brought a spokesman from Dickie Dee into the finance and economics committee to make a prebudget presentation.

Mr. Harris: I too want to join in the great Dickie Dee controversy of the day. I too am surprised that the Treasurer does not appear to be familiar with the Dickie Dee problem, because I sent to the Treasurer quite an extensive brief on Dickie Dee that was prepared by a young lady who was one of the entrepreneurs who went through the startup youth venture capital program while she was in school. Lucie Sèguin was her name, in case the Treasurer might want to refresh his memory. He probably has not responded to this piece of correspondence yet, even though it came in well over a month ago, if my recollection is correct. It may be six, seven or eight weeks ago.

A young entrepreneur, still a student, started one corner store in my riding and now has two corner stores rivaling Mac's Milk and Mike's Milk—they had all better watch out in the future—and also took on the Dickie Dee franchises. She spent a considerable amount of time and put a lot of thought into her presentation to the Treasurer. I am not sure if he still fully understands after the explanation, but the tax laws differentiate ice cream scooped out into a cone as opposed to the already pre-scooped and packaged ices. Of course, if you throw a little sprinkle of chocolate on it, now all these things are taxable, but in an ice cream store you can throw the little sprinkles on right there in front of people and it is not taxable.

It is a problem, and had the Treasurer read his mail he might have corrected it. Unfortunately, it has not been done. I do not know whether there is still room—there probably is not for opposition members—but if the Treasurer wanted to propose a frame of reference to accomplish this, I am sure we can go over this tomorrow to give him tonight to look it up and do that.

Mr. Swart: My only reply would be that I am a little bit disappointed in what the Treasurer had to say, in his amiable way. A year ago, he said in writing almost exactly the same thing he said here today, and I do not feel I am making much progress.

I would have liked him to stand up and give some clear indication that he would at least consider it for next year's budget. I remind him that of course it is pre-election time and to give a bit more positive response would not do any harm to his party, as well as to the rest of us here who have people in our ridings who are concerned about this.

Maybe getting up to answer another question, he can be a bit more positive about this one and sneak that answer in as well.

Mr. Barlow: I have several things I would like to mention to the Treasurer, and I wonder if, rather than starting, I should move adjournment.

Mr. Speaker: There are three minutes left. Perhaps the member could get started, if he wishes, and then move adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Barlow: If you wish, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to join in with those who have already mentioned about the new exemption of \$4 for restaurant meals. I suppose I should congratulate the Treasurer for once again throwing a bit of chaos into the restaurant business by having the restaurateurs reprogram their machines. I am sure he will vividly recall my discussion when the first \$1 amendment was brought forward.

At that time, I think I stated that it was costing the people who operate the restaurants something like up to \$600 to reprogram their machines to accommodate the tax exemption. Then, of course, we went through the same thing a year later in the 1986 budget when the amendment was made to increase the exemption to \$2, so that the people at McDonald's and all the smaller stores that had these restaurant meals all had the opportunity of again calling in the specialists, the people who make money on reprogramming machines, to have their cash registers reprogrammed.

Now they will go through this same business once again to accommodate the \$4—all in the interest, of course, of fulfilling the election promise, the only election promise that this government has so far been able to introduce and fulfil on its own without the assistance of the famous accord.

For the third time, the people who operate the restaurants once again go to this expense. It could

have been done all at one time back in 1985 if they really were interested in fulfilling that particular promise rather than going through that nonsense of reprogramming each time the Treasurer comes up with another buck, and this time two bucks.

Mr. Speaker, I have at least one other thing I

want to discuss and there just is not time between now and six o'clock to do so, so if you wish, I shall move the adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr. Barlow, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Wednesday, June 3, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, June 3, 1987

The House met at 1:33 p.m.

Prayers.

COMMISSION ON ELECTION FINANCES

Mr. Speaker: I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 12th annual report of the Commission on Election Finances for the year 1986.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Baetz: The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) finally came to Ottawa to announce the increase in hospital beds and additional construction that he promised more than one year ago. His announcement was welcomed by all of us. Regrettably, this minister, who consistently has trouble in differentiating between crass partisan politics on the one hand and proper government programs on the other, tried clumsily to make a political event out of the occasion.

Flanked only by local Liberal MPPs, he stated that the added beds were necessary because of years of neglect by the previous administration. That misguided remark has the people of Ottawa wondering where this new minister was during the past decade when the previous government spent hundreds of millions in the Ottawa-Carleton region developing world-class hospital facilities for that area.

As part of this phenomenal growth, the Heart Institute of the Ottawa Civic Hospital became world-renowned. The Ottawa General Hospital, an obsolete downtown hospital, was relocated and built into the most modern bilingual hospital in the world. The outstanding Queensway-Carleton complex grew out of an empty field. The Royal Ottawa Hospital was transformed from a small mental health clinic to its present magnificent status.

The people of Ottawa can perhaps forgive the new minister for not being aware of all this phenomenal growth, but the politically sophisticated people of the nation's capital are less likely to forgive him for his clumsy, heavy-handed efforts to make what should have been a nonpartisan, good-news day into a rather ugly piece of partisan politics.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Martel: The night of the accident at Levack mine that cost four workers their lives, I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) to conduct an investigation into whether Inco mines and other mines in Ontario had a policy where work was allowed to be done in the shaft while at the same time work was going on above. Inco indicated on a number of occasions at the briefing that Joe Kuhle was in fact working above the inspection crews.

I have a letter here written by R. J. Ludgate, an Inco manager, to J. R. Doran, district mining engineer, Ministry of Labour, dated April 30, 1980, that states in part:

"We agree with you that mucking a shaft bottom can be done safely during hoisting. This has been confirmed by the crew that has mucked shaft bottoms while hoisting operations were in progress."

In other words, the practice was to allow workers to work down in a shaft while someone was working, and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and those responsible in the Ministry of Labour knew it.

The question remains, was this practice investigated by the Ministry of Labour? I do not know, because the Minister of Labour has not made a statement to this time. I am also told by an official of the Ministry of Labour that there is a report that indicates that one month prior to the accident at the Levack mine a similar incident occurred.

Finally, since the company maintains that its policy is that no one works above the men who are working in a shaft and we know this is a practice that is going on, why should a worker be charged?

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEES

Mr. Haggerty: As members of the House are aware, this week has been designated as Canadian Environment Week with a special focus on environmental issues and challenges facing us at this time. One development that is of particular significance and is very encouraging is the establishment of environment committees by various locals of the Canadian Auto Workers union.

In the city of St. Catharines and Niagara region, for instance, CAW Local 199 has brought into existence an environment committee that reports to readers of 199 News on a variety of topics of current and historical importance.

Chairperson Catherine Murney, vice-chairperson Dorothy Abrams and secretary Roland Vangameren have been given the responsibility to familiarize themselves with environmental issues in Ontario and Canada to keep members of Local 199 informed. Their attendance at various conferences and workshops has been most welcome and valuable to increasing environmental awareness in their community.

It is encouraging to see the labour-union movement becoming deeply involved in the environmental scene, as workers of this province are able to see on a firsthand basis the detrimental effects of the neglect of pollution problems and the circumvention of our laws.

PLAINVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr. Sheppard: I rise today to make a few comments about a letter to the editor that recently appeared in one of the local newspapers. The letter was written by a grandmother who was completely devastated with the condition of Plainville Public School, which her five-year-old grandson attends.

The grandson had made reference to a family of rats living under his portable classroom and how the rats would come out to watch the students. Upon further investigation, the grandmother discovered that families of rats actually do live under several of the portable classrooms, and furthermore that the principal has to do rat control before the children can exit the portables.

The condition of Plainville Public School is deplorable. The school, which was built to accommodate 80 students, now has more than 200 students in attendance. There is not even enough water pressure to flush the toilets and use the drinking fountain at the same time. This is now not only a matter of education but also a matter of public health.

I call upon this government to stop issuing empty press releases and looking for headlines and to start solving the problems faced by children at Plainville Public School.

I will send over a clipping to the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway). I see he is not here, but I will leave it on his desk.

1340

POLICE PURSUITS

Ms. Gigantes: Two nights ago, on the Toronto late night local CBC television news, I

learned of yet another police chase. I always shudder when I hear of such chases because they have produced damage, injury and death in Ontario for years. Like other members of the public, I have become increasingly doubtful that the end of these police chases can in any way be justified by the very dangerous means police are employing.

Last night, I walked up Queen's Park Crescent and saw a large stone-covered lamp-post, one of those decorative huge lamp-posts at the edge of the sidewalk. This heavy post had been shifted off the sidewalk, and the imprint of where it had fallen diagonally across the walk is embedded as testimony to what might have happened to a person walking by during the Monday night police chase.

On Monday, the police nabbed a 19-year-old driver who was charged with possession of a stolen vehicle, dangerous driving and three other offences. During the chase, the car went out of control and crashed into two other cars. The lamp-post was broken off and fell across the sidewalk. No one was injured. Was it worth the risk? I think not. I want this government to begin taking action to remove that risk.

DR. CECIL SHAVER

Ms. Hart: It is with great regret today that I must inform the Legislature of the passing of one of Ontario's most devoted medical practitioners. Last Saturday, Dr. Cecil Shaver, the founder of the Shaver Hospital for Chest Diseases in St. Catharines, died at the age of 85.

Dr. Shaver, a well-known community leader in St. Catharines, spent more than 59 years in his chosen profession after graduating in medicine from the University of Toronto. In 1927, he was appointed director of the St. Catharines Consumptive Sanitarium, at that time located in a farmhouse. When drugs became available for the treatment of tuberculosis in 1947, it was reclassified as a general hospital.

Dr. Shaver, who spent 47 years at the hospital as superintendent and medical director, retired in 1974; however, that retirement was short-lived. When the hospital experienced financial difficulties, he was asked to assume his old post. They needed him to steer it through the difficult times when its very survival was in question. Dr. Shaver returned in 1976 and his leadership enabled the hospital to continue its work.

I recently had the great pleasure of visiting the Shaver Hospital and was very impressed with his creation. I believe, as do countless others in the health care field, that Dr. Shaver will for ever be

recognized for being well ahead of his time as a leader in the revolutionary concept of preventive medicine and health promotion.

NORTHERN REGIONAL TREATMENT CENTRE

Mr. Gordon: Last fall, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) promised the people of Sudbury that he would establish a northern treatment centre for prisoners in Sudbury. He raised the hopes and the dreams of the unemployed in Sudbury. Since that time, the minister has trashed those dreams. He has taken away that little bit of bread he offered to them.

Time and time again the regional municipality has met with the minister and his officials trying to find a suitable site. At the present time, there is a suitable site next to two hospitals and close to Laurentian University, where there are social-work programs. When is he going to make a decision about this northern treatment centre? People have a right to hope. Those people in Sudbury who are faced with 10 per cent and 12 per cent unemployment need jobs and need jobs now. When is he going to do something about this?

The minister has put the people of Sudbury in a prison—a false prison of hope. It is about time he did something.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: They were in a prison when they elected you.

Mr. Speaker: Order. That completes the allotted time for members' statements.

Statements by the ministry? None?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are no ministerial statements. Oral questions.

Mr. Harris: Before oral questions, we understand why the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) are not here, but do we know whether any of the eight, 10 or 12 ministers or so who are supposed to be here are going to be in?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am not really my brother's keeper, but my brothers are even now taking their places.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

Mr. Pope: My question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Could the minister tell us what the projected

overcapacity in the auto industry in North America will be by 1990 in terms of the number of cars, the number of plants involved and the number of jobs at risk in Ontario?

Mr. Gordon: Don't say 42 years.

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The member mentioned the 42 years; I did not. Let me tell him and the member who asked the question, never has the auto industry been more healthy than it has been under this government over the last two years.

Mr. Pope: I think it is perfectly in keeping that we have a Liberal Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology who has no information or knowledge whatsoever on an industry on which 285,000 people in this province are dependent. He does not know a thing about it. All he does is get up and rant and rave. He has no knowledge or information to share.

When the minister knows very well that there is a problem of overcapacity arriving in two and a half years, that very many jobs are at risk in Ontario and that the auto industry itself, which was secure under our previous governments, is now at greater risk than it has ever been at any time in its history, can he tell us what he is doing to protect Ontario jobs and Ontario's industries? What is he doing to protect us for the next two and a half years?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: First, let us get one thing clear. The member is the one who rants and rages in this House, not other people. I again tell him that never has the auto industry been more healthy than it has been during the last two years of government.

I would also tell the member that we are not as pessimistic as he and many of the other people who feel the auto industry is going to fail in this province.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Cochrane South would like to ask a final supplementary.

Mr. Pope: By 1990, imports to the North American market will approach five million vehicles, making 22 million vehicles available each year to serve a market for only 18 million vehicles, resulting in 10 surplus assembly plants in America and putting 285,000 jobs at risk in this province, and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology does not know a thing about it, has no plans and is doing nothing to face that eventuality in 1990.

That is the same Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology who, along with the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio), made a secret deal about softwood lumber that put hundreds of

jobs in jeopardy in northern Ontario; they did nothing about it and they are walking away from the responsibility.

Why is the minister walking away from his responsibility to 285,000 people in this province and their families? Why is he not helping to plan for these problems that are right at our doorstep now? He knows the United Auto Workers are anxious to get at it, as is the Governor of Michigan. When is he going to start acting like a minister?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: We are not walking away from our responsibilities whatsoever. There are ongoing studies that both the government and private industry are doing and they are looking at it. Again, I do not remain as pessimistic as the member does, neither do many of the companies that are investing in this great province. Auto parts manufacturers are investing in it, the Big Three are putting further investment in. They have confidence in this province and so do many others, even though the member does not.

1350

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). I do not know if he is about. I wonder if we could stand down our second question until the minister arrives?

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement to stand down the question?

Agreed to.

Mr. Rae: Mr. Speaker, I want to stand down both my questions. I have a question for the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and a question for the Minister of Health and I was told they would both be here.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement to stand down those two questions?

Agreed to.

Mr. Pope: This government is obviously in a shambles; that is the problem. None of the ministers are here who are supposed to be here. We have a minister who does not know anything about 285,000 jobs at risk. What a Liberal shambles we have in this House.

Mr. Speaker: I recognized the member for Cochrane South to ask a question.

POLICE INVESTIGATION

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Solicitor General. Tomorrow the standing committee on public accounts is going to deal with a motion which I introduced—and it may or may not pass; that remains to be seen—dealing with the production of documents the Solicitor General

has steadfastly refused to produce over many weeks now.

He can end that confrontation tomorrow in the public accounts committee by simply agreeing today to make public the Ontario Provincial Police report—draft, final, interim, whatever he wants to call it—that has been made to his office, to his ministry and to the Ministry of the Attorney General. Will the minister end this needless confrontation and coverup by releasing that report today?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I would challenge the member opposite to show evidence that such a report exists, because I can tell all members of this House that there is no final report on any of those investigations. I could go into great length of detail as to the number of months it will still take to complete those, and the number of witnesses still to be interviewed. If the member wanted to go into that at length, I would be happy to do so, and it would certainly show there are no reports subject to any Speaker's warrant that may be dealt with tomorrow in the public accounts committee.

Mr. Pope: The Solicitor General can water-ski around this question all he wants. The fact of the matter is that an investigation was started last fall. There were full and complete hearings in the public accounts committee that lasted three months. Those transcripts are in the hands of the Ontario Provincial Police, his ministry and the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The minister had full and adequate disclosure of all the information over six months ago. When is the minister going to stop the coverup and produce the report which he himself is now saying he is suppressing?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: Again, I would ask that the statement be corrected. I have not said I am suppressing anything. I have said the reports are not available because they have not been completed and that record can stand. If the member wants to look at what was done in the public accounts committee hearing, that was one set of witnesses. He might be interested to know, as I have said, that in the one investigation—the honourable member has not referred to which one of three ongoing investigations he is referring to today—I can tell him it will be at least six months before the one report will be completed, because the actual interviewing of witnesses will take place in both the United States as well as Canada and there are some 250 of those witnesses still to be interviewed.

ACCESS TO LAKES

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. The minister will know that all across northern Ontario there is a great deal of anger about his policy, unstated as far as we know but nevertheless a policy, of closing off access to many lakes.

Can the minister tell us why he closed access to all those lakes all across northern Ontario in the same year that he levied the annual angler's domestic resident fishing licence, and why he did that without ever coming to the Legislature and without any kind of proper public consultation across northern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I cannot agree that we are closing all access roads in northern Ontario. The fact of the matter is, access roads are put there for a very particular purpose and that is to do forestry work. When they are no longer needed, there are those areas that should be protected and there are those roads that are closed because they are no longer needed for the purpose for which they were built.

We are examining that whole issue of access and access roads into those various areas, but we have had personal involvement where, for instance, two bridges that were involved in the access became a danger to the public and for those reasons they were closed. There are many reasons that roads would be closed; and I am sure when we examine the reasons and take into account what the member is suggesting, it will be evident that I want to provide every opportunity I can for those people to use roads to get to those remote areas to enjoy the recreational aspects of fishing and hunting.

[Applause]

Mr. Laughren: Before they clap, I should tell members that the minister, with all due respect, as we are wont to say around this place, does not know what he is talking about.

The Minister of Natural Resources allowed the forestry companies to cut access roads almost down to the lakeshores and provided access for fishermen all across northern Ontario. Now the ministry is going in and arbitrarily closing off access to those lakes. Would the minister make a commitment here and now to declare a moratorium on any closures until there has been proper public consultation through public meetings all across northern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The member might suggest that the minister does not know what he is talking about but he just made the point himself that the roads were cut down there to access the forests.

They were there for that very reason, and I agree with him on that score. What he is asking for now is that after the purpose of the road has been served to the extent that it would be, we leave the road open.

I say that the citizens of Ontario, and maybe the citizens of northern Ontario, are going to pay a great deal of money to keep those kinds of roads open. If the member expects the government to continue to put money in to maintain roads for other purposes, I would take that into account. Certainly, to the degree that we can get public input as to the need to keep those roads in place, that would be a priority of mine.

I also take into account that there are some areas where lakes are used for the purpose of tourism, and I think people in northern Ontario themselves are willing to accept that as being a reasonable way to protect that resource.

I share with the member that I would be prepared to examine that whole process.

Mr. Speaker: I see the Minister of Health is in his place. We will return to the question from the member for Brantford.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Gillies: We would like to offer the Minister of Health an opportunity to give a full and appropriate explanation of his very questionable fund-raising techniques. What we would like to know from this minister is whether he personally authorized members of his staff to access ministry mailing lists in order to address fund-raising letters for \$200-a-head cocktail party invitations to invite those people to his function.

Hon. Mr. Elston: My staff did not access any special ministry mailing lists for any purpose with respect to this. I can tell the honourable member the names are really quite well known, quite public. If he wishes to take a look at the published lists of memberships in the associations, he too could find those names.

Mr. Gillies: The minister would have to agree it has become very apparent to the public that a lot of these invitations went to people who have absolutely no affiliation with the Liberal Party. They went to health care professionals and to the administrators of hospitals. Will the minister table all the lists that were used for these invitations? Will the minister bring this matter before the public now? Will he not agree that this kind of sleazy fund-raising has no place whatsoever in Ontario politics?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman can find the names of the people who were

addressed invitations for this particular event without too much difficulty. If the honourable gentleman wants my list, I will let him have my list. I understand that his party is in need of lists for this particular purpose. I have no problems. I will make it available to both parties, I have no big problem with that.

I will help the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) with respect to his official agent. I understand that he received an invitation to attend. Everybody in the province is invited to attend on June 15, at the University Women's Club, if they wish to attend. There is no problem with that. I will provide the member with the list of names of everybody who was invited.

Mr. Gillies: I really think the minister is missing the point here and I am not sure he appreciates how serious this is. These people received an invitation from the Minister of Health with a government crest on it, with absolutely no mention of the Ontario Liberal Party on it. These went to a number of people in the health field who depend on him and his ministry for funding.

1400

I say to the minister, only he and his government can put an end to this kind of practice. The last time one of these scandals came up with this government, one of the chief Liberal fund-raisers, William Somerville, said in March to the Toronto Star, "Politicians tend to listen better when they know that money for the party is involved."

Is Mr. Somerville speaking for this government and this party when he says that? Is this the kind of open access to government we have been reduced to in two short years?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman has raised questions about fund-raising and the type of campaign that is carried on. I can tell the honourable gentleman that in the Globe and Mail of March 30, 1985, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party is singled out as sending out election campaign material that appears to use official government stationery and envelopes and carries the signature of the Premier. The honourable gentleman cannot have it both ways.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Obviously, they want to say it did not happen. It did happen. This particular invitation I sent out to an event for June 15 is open for everybody in the province. I can tell the honourable gentleman that people are

freely able to attend or not to attend and it will go on as scheduled.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. Rae: I want to take this opportunity to introduce the Minister of Health to two people who are not on his list. They are Cordelia Simpson and Dorothy Delol, who are sitting in the gallery today. They are nursing home workers, and for some reason they did not receive his letter for the \$200 fund-raiser, nor have they been given an opportunity, since his becoming the Minister of Health, to meet with him to talk about the fact that they do not have pensions. In fact, 25,000 workers in the nursing home industry do not have private pensions.

I wonder if the minister can tell us why he has been so abjectly and completely silent, particularly when the arbitrator in a recent award, Mr. Teplitsky, said he regarded the fact that these women did not have a pension as something that shocked the conscience of Ontario. Why has he not responded?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman knows we have had serious discussions about several aspects of the differences of care being provided in our extended care facilities. I think Mr. Teplitsky's arbitration comments are well known to the ministry and I can say the suggestion that was made by the honourable arbitrator is being very widely considered within the ministry in terms of the discussions about the level of funding which is appropriate to that area of endeavour.

What has to be considered, of course, is the impact of the government funding of private pension programs. As the member knows, as a third party with respect to negotiations between the employer and the employee in this situation, we do have to understand and know what the implications of a decision might be if we make a move to fund a particular program, as suggested by the arbitrator.

Mr. Rae: I want the House to know the minister has not fessed up to the fact that he personally has not met once with the employees or their representatives with respect to the establishment of a pension plan. He has refused to meet. He has failed to meet with these people.

They are waiting to meet with him to get an answer as to why those who work in the nursing home industry, where old people are cared for under the extended care program funded by the government of Ontario, do not have a pension while other employees who work in municipal homes for the aged and charitable homes for the

aged do have a private pension, a pension which presumably is also funded, at least in part, by the transfer payments from the government of Ontario.

I would like to ask the minister why, when he is busy throwing cocktail parties for \$200 fund-raisers, he is prepared to meet with the people who want to put up \$200 but he is not prepared to meet with the people who make \$10 an hour in Ontario and deserve to have that kind of treatment from their government.

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman has it wrong again. We meet with people all across the province in various activities in terms of all the people who have needs.

The question of my dealing directly with the employees' association at this particular time, when the question of setting up the program is really one between the employer and employee, is not quite appropriate.

The suggestion by the arbitrator is that there be a program established, and I understand the employers and the employees have some sense of agreement on that. At the same time as they are asking that to be done, the member is asking me to provide more funds for increasing staff levels and increasing the level of care in those facilities. The suggestion is that the government provide more funds for us to establish a private pension plan for these people. They are suggesting that if the employers do not have the wherewithall, they be funded.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that has special implications right across the government, and we are considering those implications in the context of all our responsibilities to the people who work in the health care system.

[Applause]

Mr. Rae: Let the record show that the Liberal Party applauds a government that fails to provide the funding for a pension plan for 25,000 workers in this province. The minister has completely and utterly misrepresented the award from Mr. Teplitsky. He does not know what he is talking about with respect to the award. It says the exact opposite of what the minister has said in this House.

Does the minister realize that award, in fact, says directly to the Minister of Health in this province that it is his responsibility to deal with the nonunionized employees with an industry-wide plan and that it is not an appropriate subject for arbitration; it is better for the government to get involved? Does he realize that? If he did realize that, why did he give such a hopeless—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked several times.

Hon. Mr. Elston: What the honourable gentleman is saying, however, is that there is an employer-employee relationship. We provide the funding; there is no question about that. But there is and there continues to be an employer-employee relationship. I am not the employer. We do flow funds into the system. I can tell the honourable gentleman and his friends that we are considering the ramifications of any recommendation by that particular arbitrator.

MINING SAFETY

Mr. Rae: My new question is for the Minister of Labour. I would like to ask the minister whether he can tell us what his understanding is of the practice with respect to workers across the province working in mine shafts while mucking is going on. Can he tell us what the practice is across the province and whether it is the general practice that workers will not work above or below other workers?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I say to the leader of the third party, I am certainly no expert on the mining industry, but my understanding is that it is quite fundamental to that industry that working above is a very dangerous practice which ought never to go on.

Mr. Rae: I am interested in that answer, because I want to share with the minister a letter which was sent April 14, 1980, from the manager of the Copper Cliff mine to J. R. Doran, the district mining engineer in the Ministry of Labour in Sudbury. I would like to refer the minister to the third paragraph of that letter, where it says: "We agree with you that mucking the shaft bottom can be done safely during hoisting. This has been confirmed by the crew that has mucked shaft bottoms while hoisting operations were in progress."

I wonder whether the minister can comment on that letter, since it does seem to imply some agreement between the company, in this case Inco, and the Ministry of Labour with respect to what is a safe practice. Can the minister confirm what is the practice across the industry?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable member knows this, but I do want to point it out to the House in case members missed the date on this letter, it is April 14, 1980. I am not certain whether on June 3, 1987, this is the view of Inco. I can say to the leader of the third party that my friends from the Sudbury area were present the day the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and I travelled to Sudbury, the day of the terrible tragedy at

Levack. Quite clearly, and again I am no expert on this, the discussions I heard that day were that both the Steelworkers' union—Local 6500 and the leadership that was there—and the leadership of that mine, and indeed of Inco, all agreed that working above was something that was not just frowned upon, but that the company did not—there was no practice.

1410

I will look into this. I will raise this question and see whether this practice is one that is going on, but that is certainly the view that Inco, and indeed with the acquiescence of the Steelworkers' union, agreed that was that party's policy—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Final supplementary, the member for Sudbury East.

Mr. Martel: Supplementary, since that is not quite factual. It was at that time on that night that I turned to the minister and said, "I want you to have an investigation conducted with respect to the rest of the Inco holdings, not as to what the policy is but in fact as to what the practice is."

This is an indication of what the practice is, and I asked him to do it, not only for Inco but also for other mines in the province, and to determine if in fact workers are working above people in shafts. The minister was going to do it. To this time we do not have a statement.

Will the minister tell me what the results of his investigation are? Does this practice go on in mines in Ontario or not?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am glad the member asks me that question. We have been doing that, exactly the commitment I made. I remember the commitment I made to the member for Sudbury East as we had those discussions on that evening. As that member will know, the director of the mining health and safety branch was there; both he and I turned to Mr. Pakalnis and said, "That is exactly what is going to go on;" and Mr. Pakalnis said, "Yes."

As the member for Sudbury East knows, there was a statement which was issued in my name, a press release, about two days later, saying that was exactly what would happen. That is exactly what has happened, and I can say to the honourable gentleman that investigation, a very detailed one, is virtually complete.

I expect within the next week to 10 days to be able to make a statement in the House on a number of matters surrounding this whole tragedy. I intend to include in that statement, as far as is possible, the results of our investigation, because I agree we should be looking not only at the policy but indeed at what the practice is as

well. We will look to see whether what appears to have been a practice on April 14, 1980, is a practice in June 1987.

POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS

Mr. Ward: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment, who I see is coming to his chair right now. Following the discovery of polychlorinated biphenyls in the monitoring well immediately adjacent to the Smithville Chemical Waste Management site, could the minister inform the House as to the status of his ministry's involvement in this situation at this time?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I can indicate to the member that when it was placed there, a number of years ago I think, as he will recall it was a private company that set up the transfer station, as it was called at that time, for the collection of PCBs around the province. Subsequent to that, some problems arose with the site.

What we have done in the interim to overcome those problems is, first, a consulting firm that specializes in this was hired in order to undertake remedial action. That remedial action is at present under way and is expected to continue. The action consists of consolidating—

Mr. Turner: He hasn't got an answer.

Mr. Jackson: Is this a ministerial statement?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I would have thought that the members would be interested in what was happening there. The action consists of consolidating the material together; and we are, of course, at the present time evaluating various methods of mobile destruction of PCBs, including high-level PCBs such as these. In the meantime, the thrust has been in the containment of this particular substance.

Mr. Ward: I wonder if the minister could advise what steps are being taken to safeguard Smithville's drinking water supply in the interim.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: In addition to the remedial work being undertaken at the present time, I can say that the ministry is continuing, on a three-times-a-week basis now, to monitor not only the private wells but also the municipal well which exists in that community at the present time.

One of the two wells was closed down by the regional municipality of Niagara because of off-site contamination, so we have been sampling the private wells and the public well and are taking remedial action.

In addition to that, of course, I announced a pipeline at a cost of approximately \$3 million

which will take water, actually from Lake Ontario, from the Grimsby plant, and will be servicing the people of that municipality by the fall, I think, of this year.

LAND TRANSFER TAX

Mr. Harris: On May 14 the Minister of Revenue, in an answer to a question about the millions of dollars of land transfer tax he forgave Gulf, indicated he would not make that information on the 500 or so properties available to the House that day. He indicated he did not have it. He was asked if he would make it available the next day, which presumably would have been May 15. He said the House was not sitting. We asked if he could get that information from his office and he said he would make it available right here in the House.

That was all over two weeks ago. Our staff has been trying to get the information from the ministry. I wonder if the Minister of Revenue would indicate when he is going to table that information or make that information available to us on all the properties he forgave the transfer tax on to Gulf.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Now. I would be more helpful with a more complete answer but the information was put in my hands an hour ago by the Deputy Minister of Revenue and I have tabled it. I was going to table it at the appropriate time and copies of it are being sent to the House leaders when it is tabled.

Mr. Harris: Perhaps I could ask the minister why it would take two weeks to assemble the information that was required, that we had asked for, when he had already signed? That information surely was all available before he signed it, or did he sign it not knowing what he signed? Why would it take over two weeks to give us the information on the millions of dollars of tax he forgave Gulf?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There was no tax forgiveness and no signature. The transfers of the properties are registered in the normal way, as is any other transfer of property, in the registry office where the tax is collected and remitted.

As far as those values are concerned, they had to be collected from all the registry offices, which has been done. The member understands the Ministry of Revenue does not assess the value; it simply taxes the value or it taxes the purchase price which was part of the deal when Petrocan bought the facilities and the properties of Gulf. There was no remission of tax, no minister's signature, nothing out of the ordinary.

The whole matter is under audit as all these are, because they were taxed at book value.

MINING SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. From the period 1965 to 1984, 224 miners were killed; in 1984-85, 15; in 1985-86, 14; and 10 have been killed already this year. Of the 82 miners killed by falls of ground, 20 were killed while scaling and 20 were killed while drilling. How will his protection devices on motorized vehicles, in new mines only, protect workers from being killed when most of them are not killed while riding motorized vehicles?

1420

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The honourable gentleman will know that this improvement in the mining regulation, and a very significant improvement it is, was arrived at arising out of the so-called Grep inquiry, the ground control and emergency preparedness inquiry, headed by the gentleman who is now the director of mediation and conciliation services, Trevor Stevenson; it is out of his unanimous report which was put together by a number of people from both the business community and labour.

We have come forward with a number of changes, including fall-on protection for these workers. A lot of the improvements are positive ones, and they supplement the very strong safety regulations already in place in the mining industry. It is interesting that just yesterday I had an opportunity to speak with a leader within the labour movement, who shall remain nameless so the honourable member will not have to come in and deny that he ever said it. It was a private conversation. He is a leader of the labour movement in the mining industry that has a number of members in the mining sector and he believes that these are very positive and very important changes. Indeed, his view was that they were long overdue, and he is glad we have got on with it.

Mr. Martel: The minister may pat himself on the back, but the people I spoke to in the trade union movement—and I spoke to three out of the four people from labour today—did not agree with him on it at all.

Let me ask the minister another question. There were 53 falls that led to fatalities in a mine, 48 falls of objects not counting rock in a mine. Proper lighting in a mine might have helped—not the helmet, but proper lighting. The new bulk mining, where you drill six inches instead of one and a half and blast, which blasts the hell out of a mine, is blamed primarily by the workers for the

many rockbursts which are occurring and which mining companies must report.

Will the minister introduce immediately an investigation and a study to determine whether the lack of proper lighting and the new bulk mining in fact are both responsible for the large number of fatalities that are occurring today?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: No.

Mr. Martel: No, I did not think so. You are a dummy.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martel: No. My people are getting killed because he will not introduce studies to find out why they are getting killed.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Sudbury East asked his question, and the answer has been given. I wish he would show respect to the House and control himself.

Mr. Martel: No; I cannot when workers are getting killed. It is too phoney.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

BRAMPTON CITY HALL

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Some time ago, the council of the city of Brampton took the position that a new city hall should be built in the city. Tenders were let and a particular contractor was chosen. I believe seven council members of the city council were upset with the decision that had been made by the totality of the council and accordingly petitioned the Minister of Municipal Affairs, as is their right. I would like to ask the minister what representations he has received to date with reference to this petition.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: I have received the petition from the Brampton people asking for a commission of inquiry, and I have asked my staff from the Cambridge office to look into the allegations made by some of the councillors, some of whom had voted for and some against the construction of a city hall complex. I can assure the member that within the next two or three weeks I will be making some announcements in the House.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr. Hennessy: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications. He is well aware that many accidents have been occurring on the Thunder Bay expressway. As a result, earlier this year the minister promised the people of Thunder Bay a study to examine the problems of this expressway. The minister promised the study would be ready by

April. It now is the month of June. Where is the report?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I thank the member for his question and his continued interest in this matter. I can report that my senior staff met with senior officials from the city of Thunder Bay early in May of this year. A number of the issues that have been raised, in particular five or six outstanding, are being reviewed by the city transportation study and its personnel and are indeed being addressed.

Through the good offices of my colleague the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes), the Ontario Provincial Police is improving its monitoring of the expressway. The illumination we talked about earlier is being addressed. The advanced signalization, which was an issue at the time, is also being addressed currently.

Mr. Hennessy: I think the people of Thunder Bay want this situation resolved. To get a little personal, it is all right to meet with the mayor, who is a Liberal, but not to meet with the Conservative member there. I cannot understand the minister's way of thinking. I asked the minister that question in the House and he did not answer. He chooses to go to the mayor of the city of Thunder Bay, who is a Liberal, and reply to him. Where does that leave the people's representative? Is the minister representing only the Liberal Party?

When is the minister going to do some work on that highway and get something done? The fire department and the city council have asked him to do something. Is he going to wait for more fatalities, more deaths, more accidents, more injuries to take place before he does anything? When is the minister going to do something?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I think we have a competition here between the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy) and the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart).

I remind the member that I would meet with the mayor of any town or municipality in this province regardless of his political stripe, which I do on a daily basis. I would also like to point out to my honourable friend that I was not at the meeting—if he was listening to my first answer. I met with one of his colleagues only this morning. I will meet with the member for Fort William any time. All he needs to do is call and let me know he wants to meet.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Reville: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Workers in industry and people living near industry need to be able to find out just what

kinds of hazardous materials those industries are using. The municipality of Windsor and the municipality of Toronto recognized this and introduced their own right-to-know bylaws. The minister killed Windsor's bylaw and he has threatened the city of Toronto to withdraw its right-to-know bylaw if it wants its other legislation to proceed.

Why would the minister stifle these two important local initiatives when he himself is unprepared to act on right to know?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am really amazed that the honourable gentleman has done so little research on this subject, because if he had, he would have found that the legislation is going to move forward very shortly and that business and labour wish to have it move forward on a national consensus.

He would also know that the Toronto legislation is riddled with some of the same weaknesses that befell the legislation in my own community of Windsor. I applaud both communities for their good intentions and indeed for the leadership they have shown in bringing this matter to public attention.

The need to have comprehensive, national legislation giving workers and the public the right to know is the reason this province took the leadership role it did in forging the national consensus we now have. In the days not too many hence, we will be coming forward with this legislation. When this legislation comes forward, I urge him and all the members of the House to get on with it and give it quick passage.

1430

Mr. Reville: It is good to know the Minister of Labour is capable of something, if only amazement. What he has not done his research on is that the federal initiative is not in any way inconsistent with municipalities approaching this issue in their way. He has continued to delay, dither and stall. Will he not now commit to this House that what we will get is a right to know what kind of hazardous materials are being used instead of endless promises that he is going to move on it?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The short answer is yes. The longer answer is that through the leadership of this government and, quite frankly, a couple of other governments, one in Quebec and Manitoba—his friends in Manitoba, and I will give credit where credit is due—we have, since the work place hazardous materials information system report came down a couple of years ago, forged a national consensus and indeed, through constant pressure on the federal government, we

have driven matters to the point that the federal legislation is finally about ready to go.

I assure the House no one has been more frustrated than I as the federal government first told us February and then told us into the early spring. It has moved an early May deadline three times in the last month and a half. Quite frankly, we are finally at a point where our legislation will dovetail closely enough with theirs that we can move forward. I expect in the not-too-distant future to be doing just that. Again, I urge the member for Riverdale, who is quite properly concerned about the workers in his riding, to convince his colleagues—particularly the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel), who I know is very supportive of this whole effort—to get on with it.

Mr. Speaker: The Minister of Colleges and Universities has a response to a question asked previously by the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner).

CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: It was on May 14 that the member for Scarborough Ellesmere asked me a question concerning the termination of funding for the Centre for Labour Studies, which is part of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto. I undertook at that time to get back to him in a couple of days.

I know I am a little bit late, but I did not think that my tardiness warranted a point of order the other day, other than the need for a little bit of theatrics from the member for Scarborough Ellesmere. In any event, I am now prepared to answer. I say that because it was the day after that question that I spoke with the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) about the same matter and undertook at that time to ask Humber College to delay consideration of the issue until I had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Lyons of the Metropolitan Toronto labour council.

The program has been funded by Humber College for a number of years, and indeed the Humber College board of governors is considering the termination of that funding. There are a number of concerns of the board of governors, including financial cost, lack of control over operations, lack of control over program quality and the status of the centre.

Notwithstanding that, as I undertook with the member for Bellwoods, I am going to be meeting with Mr. Lyons from the labour council to hear his point of view on the matter. I should say that unless I hear something radically different from what I have been told thus far, I am certainly not

of a mind to interfere with the decision of the board of governors.

Mr. Warner: The minister calls it interference. I would call it leadership to protect a course that has been established for 12 years and which course has provided tremendous assistance to workers and others throughout our community.

Does the minister realize that unless he shows some leadership, he will disappoint thousands of people? I quote from a participant of the course: "Finally, I felt comfortable raising the issue of racism among my co-workers" or "When an emergency arose at the plant, I knew exactly what steps to take." There are hundreds and hundreds of quotes of the 10,000 people who have successfully gone through the courses.

Why will the minister not show leadership today and simply say that this course needs to be protected and needs to continue to be funded?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am surprised at my friend's view of leadership. When we as a government and as a ministry were undertaking steps to give boards a better ability to make the decisions they are required to make, I thought that party was behind those decisions; indeed, of bringing members from the internal community served by community colleges as part of boards of governors. Now, when there is a decision my friend thinks is not an appropriate decision, he says the Minister of Colleges and Universities should simply intervene and take away the authority of boards of governors to make the decisions. I will tell my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere that those programs will continue, and I expect they will continue within the department of continuing education within the college. I think it is inappropriate that he grandstand and suggest that we just take over colleges when they make decisions he is not in favour of.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

Mr. Warner: As under the rules, I am dissatisfied with this answer and I am prepared to debate it at the next possible moment.

Mr. Speaker: I hope the honourable member will look at the standing order and give written notice as well.

APPORTIONMENT OF EDUCATION TAXES

Mr. Mitchell: I have a question to the Minister of Education. A week ago, I suggested that the minister should be called, more properly, the minister for interference with the Ontario Municipal Board. I suggested to him at the time that he overstepped the bounds he was allowed

under the Education Act and, in fact, tried to direct the Ontario Municipal Board after, I understand, he met with four mayors of other municipalities without the courtesy of a meeting with Nepean Mayor Franklin or Anton Wytenburg.

It was only after some fuss was raised that he met with them in a restaurant in Renfrew and said to them at the time that he wanted the OMB to examine the implications of the Nepean-Goulbourn decision, because other municipalities had started appealing. I wonder, then, why the minister did not interfere in the Onondaga appeal. Was that because it is in the riding of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon)?

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Mitchell: Can the minister table for me and the residents of Nepean how many municipalities are as adversely affected as Nepean and Goulbourn?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Where does one begin with that kind of question? Let me try. I think my friend from Nepean might sit down with our colleague the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) and talk this over, because there is a certain dissonance that I detect from over there on this question.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Two Tory positions again?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would not say that, because that might be uncharitable. I want to say as well that I have met on a number of occasions with the mayor of Nepean.

Mr. Mitchell: After the fact.

Hon. Mr. Conway: No. I have met in the Tea Room in Renfrew. I have met at the Talisman in Ottawa. I have met on a number of occasions. I met the mayor of Nepean in 1975 when he was a Liberal candidate running under the standard of the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon), so long has my association been with Mr. Franklin. I want to set to rest any confusion that might exist in the mind of the member for Carleton that there exists some difficulty in meeting as between the mayor of Nepean and myself.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we are taking legal advice on this matter and we are working to a solution in the long term for this particular difficulty. I can simply make very clear as well that the reference to a situation in Brant county, with some suggestion that there is some personal or political difference there, is simply not true.

Mr. Mitchell: After the minister's interference, the OMB did hold a hearing and the Ministry of Education people had their wrists

slapped. The results of that hearing accomplished two things; one of them that the appeal of Nepean, Goulbourn and Cumberland was upheld by the OMB, but what they also did was freeze any further appeals by Nepean, Goulbourn and Cumberland or other municipalities.

What I want to know from the minister is, since his ministry acknowledges there is a problem, when is he going to have the rules changed and get the situation resolved so that it does not happen again?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Faster than the administration of which the honourable member was a part.

1440

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I know the minister has been told by his staff of the demonstration that is even now taking place on the steps of this building, where citizens from the township of West Lincoln accompanied by their town crier have decried the minister's lack of any policy on the reduction, reuse and recycling of liquid industrial waste.

Given that this province produces 1.5 million tons of liquid industrial waste per year and that the facility the Ontario Waste Management Corp. is planning in West Lincoln can handle only up to 300,000 tons as a maximum, 10 per cent to maybe 20 per cent of the province's waste, can the minister tell us how he plans to dispose of the 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the province's waste that the OWMC is not planning to handle?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: It is an interesting question in that it is often put to me in the opposite direction: that the OWMC is not a necessary component and that when Premier Davis set up the OWMC it was not really required. I recall that we in opposition and the New Democratic Party agreed with Premier Davis when he established the OWMC to deal with the problem of hazardous wastes.

The member identifies, however, something beyond those substances that would be able to be dealt with by the OWMC. The waste management branch of our ministry has a mandate, along with the OWMC having a mandate, to establish technologies that deal with much of the waste that comes from these plants. Part of that will be involved in and will evolve from the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement that will deal with the waste produced that ordinarily would come out in effluent, either directly into water-

ways or into the various sewers in Ontario. The member raises what I consider to be a legitimate question. She seems to understand the need for a method of treating waste in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Supplementary.

Mrs. Grier: I do not think anyone in this House needs to be told by the minister that he has a mandate to deal with liquid industrial waste. I thought that was what he was put in the job to do. What I was asking him was, given that he has the mandate, why does he not have any plans, any money or any priorities to do something about it? He tells me about MISA, which we all know has 12,000 loopholes.

Mr. Speaker: That is a good question. I thought that was the question.

Mrs. Grier: Given that in 1984-85, the OWMC allocated only one per cent of its budget to reduction or reuse, and given that MISA does not cover 12,000 industries, can the minister explain how he plans to deal with the 80 per cent of the province's waste the OWMC will not handle?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As I indicated to the member, the waste management branch of the Ministry of the Environment is undertaking a number of activities that are designed to do exactly that. Under regulation—

Ms. Fish: What does the member for Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South) have there? Hold it up so we can see.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pope: That is all on television; way to go.

Mr. Speaker: Minister.

Mr. Breaugh: You need your parliamentary assistant back.

Mr. McClellan: Is that clown your parliamentary assistant?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am trying to give as succinct an answer as possible.

Mr. McClellan: With a deputy minister and a parliamentary assistant like that, no wonder you are having problems.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Some days I think the member wishes he had my problems.

I indicate to the member that within the allocation of funds for the waste management branch of the Ministry of the Environment is a considerable allocation of funds for exactly the purposes the member describes.

It seems to me that regulation 309, which deals with substances essentially from their production

until the time they are laid to rest, has had a major effect as well. In addition, the member may be familiar with the fact that we are at the present time upgrading regulation 308, which deals with emissions that would come from various stacks in the province. All of those are components that deal with hazardous waste. I can tell the member we have a very extensive program in that regard.

PETITIONS

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Gordon: I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Sudbury has the floor.

Mr. Gordon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition presented by Mrs. Doralice Carroll. Mrs. Carroll spent a number of weeks with the petition in Sudbury because she is against the kind of gas prices that we pay in northern Ontario. The petition reads as follows:

"Why should people in northern Ontario—"

Mr. Speaker: I was just waiting for you to read the exact wording of the petition.

Mr. Gordon: I was waiting for a little quiet in this House, Mr. Speaker.

The petition reads: "Why should people in northern Ontario pay more for gasoline than the people in southern Ontario?"

This petition was signed by a great many people; as a matter of fact, 348. I have to say that Mrs. Doralice Carroll feels very strongly about this petition, as do the people who signed it.

Mr. Speaker: There are many members standing and many members having conversations. Are there any other members wishing to present a petition?

STRIKEBREAKING

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a petition that asks the Lieutenant Governor in Council to do what the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), when he was in opposition, used to say he would do if he were the Minister of Labour.

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Minister of Labour to immediately enact legislation to stop the hiring of strikebreakers in Ontario."

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Callahan from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption.

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive Adona Properties Ltd.;

Bill Pr11, An Act to revive The Quetico Foundation;

Bill Pr 39, An Act respecting Canadian Opera Company.

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill Pr20, An Act respecting the Town of Lindsay.

Your committee would recommend that the fees, less the actual cost of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr11, An Act to revive The Quetico Foundation and Bill Pr39, An Act respecting Canadian Opera Company.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

WITHDRAWAL OF BILL 68

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the order for second reading of Bill 68, An Act to postpone the Commencement Date of certain Provisions of the Mental Health Act be discharged and the bill withdrawn.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I do not think we can let this motion go by without making a few comments about the process that has been followed over the last few months which, I must say, is turning out to be a regular process with this minister and this ministry.

1450

One wants to look at this minister and how he has handled the legislation that has come from this ministry before the Legislature since he has become minister. It can only be spelled out and it can only be described as somewhat amateurish, and that is a charitable way of describing the process.

We had drug legislation introduced by this minister. We had amendments to that drug legislation; we had amendments and we had amendments. They were produced every day in committee; no advance notice, no proper notice, no consultation, nothing at all. That is how he handled those pieces of legislation.

We had nursing home legislation handled in exactly the same way. We had extra billing legislation handled in exactly the same incompetent way. Now we have a bill that deals with the same subject, which was initially addressed by the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) in amendments to Bill 7. It was further addressed by

Bill 190. It was then further addressed by this bill, Bill 68, and then further addressed by Bill 78.

Mr. Reville: And Bill 199.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Bill 199 as well.

It is too bad the minister is not listening, because the way this issue has been handled is an absolute disgrace. In addition to having the standing committee on social development looking at the issue, he has committees within his ministry looking at the issues. The only thing that has happened with regard to this issue is that the minister and his bureaucrats did not properly think through the consequences of his potential policy. He introduced legislation, that the doctors supported on one hand and then later did not support, and then he found out the whole lay of the land.

I do not think this party is going to be so co-operative in the future. The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) had better get his act together or he is not going to have a free ride in dealing with legislation in such an incompetent, amateurish way. I think it is fair to say this side is disgusted with the way this issue has been handled and the way the legislation has been handled by this minister.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if you have had a chance to read this particular bill, but I would like to join my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke), especially having been put in the invidious position of being in the chair for all these bouts with this particular minister throughout all these pieces of legislation and seeing the way they have been handled.

If one looks at Bill 68 one will notice this has to do, ironically, with competence. This has to do with the whole question of the competence of people within the mental health system to make decisions, and now bringing in an override to the rights of competent people to say they do not wish a certain kind of treatment or for incompetent people or their representatives to say they do not want a certain kind of treatment for the patient.

I want to run through the list of bills. The member for Ottawa Centre brought in, in the open and public meeting, a resolution which for the first time gave real rights to the mentally ill in our institutions under Bill 7. It passed.

Mr. Runciman: It was not for the first time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not know if the member for Leeds (Mr. Runciman) knows much about mental health legislation in this province—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Interjections are out of order.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: —but there have been no rights for mental health residents to be able to make determinations or to participate, as a right, in treatment decisions about them in this province until the resolution moved by the member for Ottawa Centre.

Under pressure by the medical lobby and others, the minister then brought in Bill 199 to delay the implementation of that section of Bill 7. He then brought in Bill 190 to try to deal with the issue of the rights given under what the member for Ottawa Centre brought forward. It was such a draconian piece of legislation that he actually had as a section of that bill an announcement that people in the community, people who were ex-psychiatric patients, would also be covered under this legislation. That was part of this thing, if one can imagine the amazing infringement of civil rights involved in that.

He got his toes stepped on, as one can well understand, so he brought in the bill now before us, Bill 68, to change the dates, again to stop the member for Ottawa Centre's motion from coming into effect for these people until next January. Then he determined or discovered that bill does not work and that he now has to come forward with Bill 78 to make it work. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, in my eight years in the Legislature I have never seen anything like it and I do not want this moment to pass without indicating that to you.

Mr. Harris: I would like to take just a few moments to comment, as well, on the process in particular. The member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) will be here very shortly. He is out on the front steps addressing those who have concerns, I assume, with this government's incompetence in another area, the group that is picketing out in front of the Legislature. I know if he were able to be here he would probably want to comment a little more on the particulars.

However, I do think that I am qualified to comment at least on the process and the ridiculous incompetence of the minister that has led to the charade of some semblance that he knew what he was doing or that the government knew what it was doing in this whole procedure.

My colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside, in particular, has pointed out the number of bills that have come forward from this minister, most of them one would presume in some form of knee-jerk reaction to a response from one pressure group or another, none of them apparently really very well thought out and none

of them thought out at least well enough to solve the problem.

Perhaps the minister was more worried about assembling his fund-raising list out of the ministry files than about paying attention to the business for which he actually was appointed to that ministry. One would certainly have to wonder, when we see the legislative, nightmarish shemozzle that this Legislature has been subjected to with the preponderance of bills in and bills out: "Can we do this? Can we do that? Can we withdraw this?"

Every day he is over here, talking to the critics. I happen to be privy at least to that amount of information because I sit beside the distinguished member for Lincoln who is the Health critic for our party and I hear the ramblings and the musings of this minister on this.

I would also like to go back briefly to the original bill and the discussions that were entertained at that time, that in fact our leader had talked about, concerns over a specific aspect, that concerning electroshock therapy and the unwillingness of the minister to deal with that very specific problem. At that time, we had really no option available to us to get the attention of the minister, other than to support the amendment of the member for Ottawa Centre.

The reason, of course, that we supported that was because it was the only way we could get the attention of the minister, who had, up until that point, seemed to be ignoring what certainly my leader felt was a very significant problem. One might ask whether we were successful in getting the minister's attention. As a result of that we got the attention, as members are aware, of a number of other groups who, I think, acknowledged some difficulty with what was there but also acknowledged difficulty with what we supported in the amendment of the member for Ottawa Centre.

None the less, I have to tell you I give the member for Ottawa Centre credit and have no hesitation in the procedural aspect of our support for her amendment which has brought this issue to a head, which should have been brought to a head right back when the original bill was there. I guess if we have any evidence that it was justified in getting his attention, it is this silly charade of a minister introducing a bill one day, withdrawing one another day, introducing another one, saying, "No, I can't go with that one." Then he gets three phone calls and he says, "No, I have to change that"; and then he gets two more phone calls and he says, "No, I have to change that."

That is really typical, as we are now finding out as we read through the press releases and some of the government bunk that is put out. It is not this Minister of Health alone; it appears to be typical of the type of forethought or lack of it, obviously, or planning or lack of it, that this government is putting into a lot of the legislation we are seeing here.

I would like to have those few kind words on the record as we deal with this motion to withdraw yet another example of the minister's incompetence.

Motion agreed to.

1500

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

WINDSOR UTILITIES COMMISSION ACT

Mr. Newman moved first reading of Bill Pr62, An Act respecting the Windsor Utilities Commission.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Newman: If I may explain, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: This is a private bill and no explanation is really allowed on private bills.

POLLS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Before the orders of the day, I wish to table the following public opinion polls.

Mr. Harris: Now he is going to tell us what they are.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Let us say, "Table these public opinion polls."

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MENTAL HEALTH AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Elston moved second reading of Bill 78, An Act to amend the Mental Health Act.

Hon. Mr. Elston: We heard a little bit about the need to make some arrangements whereby we can consider the amendments proposed under Bill 190 which deal with the Mental Health Act. Bill 78 is required so we can take the time to consider the issues raised by the amendment spoken about earlier by a number of the people in the Legislative Assembly, Bill 190.

As members know, committee hearings on Bill 190 began on May 26. Bill 190 would maintain review board authority but with new safeguards to protect the rights of patients. For example, doctors who examine an involuntary patient will be required to give reasons why they believe the patient will not improve without

treatment and why the review board should issue a treatment order.

Second, in granting authority to proceed with treatment, the review board must specify the period of time for which the treatment order is effective. The board may also include terms and conditions under which treatment is to be provided.

Third, during the course of any appeal by a patient or relative regarding the board decision, treatment will not proceed unless a judge of the court rules otherwise.

In addition, under the bill all patients will be advised of their right to designate a representative to give consent to treatment should they become incompetent. The measure also removes the legal uncertainties now surrounding the treatment of voluntary and informal psychiatric patients as well as those on Lieutenant Governor's warrants.

I urge the members of this House to co-operate in passage of Bill 78 so the delicate balance between patients' rights and the need for psychiatric treatment can be thoroughly reviewed and deliberated within the legislative process.

The point of Bill 78 is to temporarily restore the authority of the psychiatric review board to issue treatment orders until July 10, 1987. Since June 1, with the implementation of the Mental Health Act amendment originally passed as Bill 7, the review board authority has been struck down. This bill will restore that authority.

Mr. Harris: I point out once again that my colleague the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) is still out on the front lawn. Obviously, the government is more incompetent than I thought on this issue.

Perhaps I could ask the minister very simply, since I heard most of his explanation but not all: is this bill to allow to remain in force until July 10 what was already in force before Bill 7 was passed and nothing else, nothing new? It is just to carry it on from May 31 until July 10?

If there is in fact something new that an uninformed person such as the lowly House leader, not the Health critic, should know about, perhaps the minister could indicate that to me.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Actually, to assist the House leader for the official opposition, the bill does not restore the authority of the review board back to May 31, 1987. It cannot do that. At this particular time, as of June 1, 1987, the review board authority does not exist in terms of new orders to be made and it will not exist until the passage of this bill reinstitutes the activity of the

review boards. With the passage and proclamation of this bill, review boards will once again exist with the new safeguards as before Bill 7, and they will then exist only up to July 10, 1987.

Mr. Reville: I find the minister's explanation of Bill 78 to be simply preposterous; not incompetent, preposterous. In fact, the explanation he has given this House has nothing to do with Bill 78 but is the minister's "phoney" justification for quite another bill.

I found it amazing that he would stand in the House and try to justify Bill 78 by speaking to another bill. In fact, he is compounding this outrage by talking glowingly of items in another bill that could have been introduced to this Legislature through the vehicle of Bill 7 but which were resisted by this government every time.

He neglects to point out that the other bill, not this bill but the other bill, contains a provision that completely violates the rights of Ontario's citizens. We do not hear a great justification of that. No; we hear that the violation of some persons' rights are somehow necessary to preserve the delicate balance between patients' rights and patient care.

The problem is that when you violate someone's rights there is no balance at all; what you have created is an imbalance. So I find the minister's explanation, which basically is a regurgitation of a compendium that was written, I presume, for the minister to try to justify this atrocity, to be quite ill placed and inappropriate.

The amusing thing about the incompetence of the minister that my two colleagues have spoken to so well is that, currently, Bill 7, as adopted by this Legislature, is now the law of the land. I think it is quite fitting that the minister's incompetence should be rewarded by a much healthier civil rights atmosphere in this province, if only for a short time.

Of course, what Bill 78 seeks to do is to repeal a very recent act of this Legislature, an act of this Legislature of December 1986 that brought Ontario into the 20th century in terms of civil rights for people. That is what this bill seeks to do, to repeal a clause. Then, under great pressure I must say, the minister has agreed that repeal will sunset after Bill 190 passes.

1510

I certainly hope quite sincerely that this particular offensive section of Bill 190 never sees the light of day and then we will have discovered yet another exercise by this minister to have been totally futile. There is no question that there are some progressive measures in Bill 190. Why did

the minister not introduce them on their own? Why did he have to couple those progressive measures with a regressive measure?

Mr. Andrewes: Briefly—I think I have missed most of this debate so I hope I am not redundant in what I might say—for the last week and a half we have had a very effective hearing going on downstairs on Bill 190. We have heard from a number of witnesses and have had good participation in the discussion with them. The discussion on Bill 190, which is before the committee, now has taken the form of debate on the subject at hand; that is, the question of the role of review boards in the treatment of competent patients and about the whole question of competency and incompetency of mental health patients.

What remains very confusing to us is the fact that we have gone through—one; two; Bill 7, three; Bill 190—now four pieces of legislation and have yet to arrive at any conclusion. I am most confused as to why the government, and the minister in particular, have found it necessary to confuse this issue with a plethora of bills postponing dates, re-enacting dates and doing whatever else these pieces of legislation are doing. What it has done is to seriously sidetrack the discussion on Bill 190 from some very serious concerns.

I only hope that when we make peace on this piece of legislation, if we ever do—that is, on Bill 78—and the issue of timing is finally put to rest, that the tarnish that remains on the whole discussion surrounding Bill 190 will not hinder this Legislature and its members from bringing in an appropriate piece of legislation and doing the right thing for people in the province who are suffering from mental illness.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think it is important that people in the public should know what this bill is about and what it is about in combination with Bill 190. If people were really aware of the implications of the suppression of civil rights that is involved in this, there would be a huge outcry against both pieces of legislation.

Yesterday in our committee, we had a presentation from David Baker of the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped, or ARCH, a legal clinic that deals with problems surrounding the disabled. I thought he put the point remarkably well. Essentially, what we have at the moment—perhaps for a few brief days depending on how quickly this is passed—is the right in Ontario for a person who is deemed to be competent and able to make decisions to decide whether he wishes to be treated in a mental institution. That is the same right that you or I,

Mr. Speaker, if we were ever to be presumed competent, would have if we were in a general hospital and decided we did not wish cancer treatments or whatever it might be. That decision, as competent individuals, would be left to us.

As well, if I were incompetent and institutionalized and my sister were my guardian, my trustee, she would have the right to say that she did not wish me to have electric shock therapy or to take particular drugs to control my state because she felt she had seen the impact of these drugs on me, the devastating side-effects I had perhaps developed over the period I had been on these drugs before.

Until we bring in this piece of legislation, people in Ontario have that right. If the members can imagine it—I want them to think of this in terms of its implications for our mental health system—what we will have now is a situation where a competent person in a mental institution can be overridden, where his desire not to have treatment can be overridden, by a board where the burden of proof is against the patient and in favour of the doctor who wishes to treat that patient against his competent desire not to be treated; not only that, but the representative of an incompetent person who makes that decision can also be overridden by the doctor who wishes to treat.

The implications of this are enormous. They essentially are as follows. There is a presumption of consent within our mental health system at this point—in fact within our medical system—that we as adults have the right to consent or deny consent to treatment if we are competent. This takes away the notion that there is any consent at all within the mental health system, because even if I go in as a voluntary patient and I am competent or have not been deemed to be incompetent and a doctor says, “I want to give you this treatment,” I will know that if I say no to his treatment he can say, “That does not matter because I am going to take it to the review board and I will win.” That is hanging over my head. That coercion now is part of the system being brought back by Bill 78.

If I am an incompetent person, one of those very vulnerable people in our society, and the trust for my physical and mental wellbeing and integrity is left with a loved one or some advocate, that advocate now can be overridden as well, so he or she have no power within the mental health system.

In my view, this destroys the whole premise of what true medical care is all about. It separates

out psychiatrists from other medical practitioners in terms of the requirement to gain this kind of normal consent that we would expect within our society. It obscures the issue, which is do we have an adequate competency test for our mental institutions? Everybody seems to be saying that we do not have; that is we are hearing from everyone who comes up on the other side of this issue before the committee. If that is the case, let us surely deal with that question of competency. Let us not take away the basic civil rights that belong to each of us.

1520

I know this is an outrageous analogy to make, and I say that as I make it: we happen to live in a democracy, but can one imagine what it would be like if we had this provision for mental institutions in a place where some of the other safeguards of our democratic legal system were not in place? I ask the members what the difference is in this power we now are vesting in our mental institutions from the mental institutions of Russia and keeping political prisoners who are competent under drugs and sedation and other kinds of torture because there is an override to competency. There is a very frightening notion involved in this.

I do not think most people realize that very few cases were taken before the review boards in the past, before the motion of the member for Ottawa Centre passed. Very few cases were taken, on an annual basis. We are finding out there were maybe 10 or 16 in a year where people were actually saying they did not want the treatment and were going to a review board.

I submit they can be dealt with in the most serious cases, where they are a threat to the safety of others or to their own health. We already have a means of dealing with those people and giving them treatment. But for the sake of dealing with the ease of treating those few people, we now are bringing in a notion of a suppression of civil rights that has implications I think are very profound for our whole society. I think it would be wise for members of this assembly to think very seriously about what they are doing when they support this piece of legislation.

The minister alleged in his opening comments that the review boards do not exist. Review boards do exist under the present legislation. The only thing they cannot deal with are these overrides of competent people's decision-making, or their representatives' desire, not to take treatment. They still deal with all the things they normally deal with, the bulk of their work, which is to deal with competency testing and

committal. That is their major role now and it will continue to be their major role.

I remind the members of this House that matters dealing with substitution consent to be added to Bill 7 were raised by the member for Ottawa Centre and were defeated in committee. Instead of those kinds of very helpful means of dealing with some of the more difficult cases, now we have come up instead with what I consider a most draconian and most dangerous approach to civil rights in this province.

When one tries to think of what a liberal party is about—for some of us this is often confusing—and when one thinks about the basic premise of liberalism, it is surely individual civil liberty, the individual's rights within society. It is very ironic in my view that to deal with a very small problem, the Liberal Party, the Liberal government, would come in with such a dangerous move in terms of the rights of mentally ill people in our province.

What this does is to reinforce the idea that somehow mental illness is so substantially different from all other medical ailments that we must deal with people's rights in a fundamentally different way. I think this reinforces all the mythologies, all the scares, all the bogymen out there about mental illness. I think it is incredibly dangerous for us to do this.

Ontario Friends of Schizophrenics, a very worthwhile organization in this province, has come before the committee wanting this kind of legislation because of their fears for their schizophrenic relatives, often sons and daughters—

Hon. Mr. Elston: Husbands and wives.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: —and husbands and wives. They come with some very poignant stories about the problems of being a schizophrenic or a friend of a schizophrenic in this province, but I am convinced that this is not the way—

Hon. Mr. Elston: Should we be prepared to ignore it?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, not to ignore it at all; but because of everything I have said up to this point, this is not the way one deals with the problem of a schizophrenic not getting the appropriate treatment. What we really need is a much quicker method of determining competency, for allowing substitute consent.

I raised it with the mother of a schizophrenic yesterday after our hearings. I said: "You are taking it from the one perspective and I understand that at this point. You went to the institution. At this point, your child has been determined to be incompetent and you are now

responsible. What if you did not want electroshock therapy for your child but instead wanted psychotropic drugs, but the psychiatrist you were dealing with demanded your child get the electroshock therapy? Do you not understand that this process we are bringing in here can override you as well?" She had not thought of that. She had not thought this was taking away her powers as the substitute consentor. She had thought only her child needed protection.

We are mixing apples and oranges when we try to deal with this issue by taking away the rights of competent people or the people who have substitute consent for incompetent people. What we really need to deal with is the question of competency and how quickly we can get people who have the right to substitute consent to have that consent. That is the issue.

I suggest to the members that given the small numbers of people who now use the override provision and given the fact that we have emergency ability to deal with those who are a danger to themselves or society, we would do much better not to enact Bill 78 at all but to allow this gap of total freedom for these people that now is out there, to allow them to have the same freedoms as the rest of us in society, and to work hard to get in a competency test that is useful and practical, and not to take away their human rights or make them the second-class citizens they have been in this society for far too long.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I could comment a little on the eloquent presentation by the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston). In many ways, we have all been moved by the presentations about the need for assistance by the Ontario Friends of Schizophrenics, among others, who came in front of the committee dealing with Bill 190. I think the honourable gentleman did point out very well that there are compelling reasons to look at what there now is in the system to assist those people. Admittedly, I believe it is not very well established yet in terms of how we help people who are worried about their children.

I think particularly of a woman who presented the story of the suicide of her son in circumstances that distracted us from listening to the rest of her presentation. It was a horrendous experience for her. These people have reached out and indicated that we ought not to change a system that at least provides them some access at this time to deal with questions of ensuring that there is some assistance to protect their loved ones.

They mentioned that we must take into account the feelings of the mothers and fathers and wives and husbands of people who suffer

from schizophrenia and understand that there are tremendous pressures on them as well. They are concerned about what is available to allow them to deal with the question of providing treatment for those of their relatives who may not understand the need for taking treatment that would provide some stability in their lives.

This bill will bring back the review boards. Because we are dealing with Bill 190, I think it is necessary that we not disturb the ability of those boards to provide service to those patients in the interim.

1530

I have a couple of comments provided to me by staff, with respect to comments by the member for Scarborough West. In particular, there is no way, as I am told, that a refusal by a voluntary patient or his or her relative can be overridden. For a voluntary patient that cannot be overridden.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We had that debate with the minister yesterday. Your staff has a different opinion, but it is not—

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable member obviously does not believe the counsel being provided. There is obviously a difference of opinion between, presumably, one of the presenters yesterday and some of the staff in the Ministry of Health.

We do need to bring this bill back to be passed, to bring back the review boards to work on behalf of patients. I am pleased to move the second reading.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On a point of order. I realize it is not appropriate under our rules to respond to a wrapup, but the minister has used part of his time to respond to my comments. I wonder if you could clear up just what that was: a response to comments or a wrapup. He kept saying he was responding and I want a chance to rebut.

The Deputy Speaker: That is the wrapup of the debate. That completes the debate. Yours was not an appropriate point of order.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

PAY EQUITY ACT

Mr. Ward, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Scott, moved third reading of Bill 154, An Act to provide for Pay Equity.

Mr. McClellan: There are a number of people who want to speak on third reading of Bill 154. What I wanted to do was to indicate to the House how I suggest we deal with the item before us.

The government has moved third reading of Bill 154. It is unfortunate the bill was ordered for third reading. It should have been ordered for committee of the whole House, but that did not happen.

After all those who have spoken on the third reading debate have concluded their remarks, I will be moving a motion to recommit Bill 154 to committee of the whole House. If it passes, it is my expectation that the proceeding in committee of the whole House would take, at most, two days.

I am not moving the motion for committal right now. I am speaking on the motion for third reading.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I was wondering whether you want a point of order or whether you were on a point of order. As you know, all members may only speak once. You are speaking now. I wanted to advise you that you would have difficulty—

Mr. McClellan: I was speaking on a point of order from the beginning.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order; just advising what you are hoping the House would do.

Mr. McClellan: Yes. I would never make such a terrible mistake, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to make certain.

Mr. McClellan: And I appreciate your intervention very much. What I would propose is that we have the third reading debate so everybody knows what is happening, and there are no surprises. When everybody has finished speaking on third reading then I will participate in the third reading debate to move a motion of recommitment, which can then be debated.

Mr. Speaker: Does any other member wish to make any comments on that point of order?

Mr. Ward: I would like to comment on the point of order. As I understand it, the House leader of the third party has proposed we complete the third reading debate at this time and subsequent to the completion of the third reading debate, he then proposes that it be recommitted for committee of the whole House. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is that an appropriate procedure?

Mr. Speaker: No; I hope I understood the member for Bellwoods correctly, that he hoped he would have an opportunity some time during the debate to offer an amendment to the motion

for third reading. I hope I was correct in understanding that.

Mr. McClellan: I did not intend to move that until everybody had finished participating in the third reading debate—that is, everybody except myself.

Mr. Speaker: I am at the member's mercy.

Mr. Harris: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker: Let me congratulate the member for Bellwoods; first of all, for indicating what he intends to do—quite a contrast, frankly, from the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and the shemozzle we have been through on all these bills.

He is merely indicating and serving notice, by way of a point of order, because there has been a lot of speculation on this, that when it comes his turn—and he intends to wait for some length of time before his turn comes to speak on third reading debate—he is serving notice so that everybody will know and there are no surprises that he plans to move a motion that it not be read for the third time, that in fact it be recommitted. I think it is a matter of courtesy that he was doing that, to the Legislature and to the members of the House. I hope that is in order, and if the Speaker so rules we proceed now with the debate.

Ms. E. J. Smith: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think it was the clear understanding of the House leader that indeed the motion would be put to refer it to committee of the whole House and speeches would be made to that and that this was an understood procedure and what was going to happen.

The present plan would mean that all speeches were over with no chance then to speak to the bill at its conclusion. This is certainly not the understanding of the Speaker of the House. We can see that the Speaker of the House is not here. It is a way of preventing the normal course of—

Mr. Harris: Au contraire, the Speaker is right in the chair.

Mr. Ferraro: The House leader.

Ms. E. J. Smith: Pardon me, the House leader. The House leader was clearly planning to speak to this and was clearly allowing what he knew was intended by the two opposition parties, that this would be referred to committee of the whole House for reasons they would give in the speeches. This was his understanding. To change the process is hardly the fair way we deal in setting out the procedures on Thursday mornings.

Mr. Harris: If I could speak to that: perhaps the member can clarify that after the speeches today, then we know, because of the courtesy of

advance notice, there will be a notice for recommitment. Mr. Speaker, perhaps you can clarify that everybody who wants to speak can speak to that motion for recommitment, I think for up to 10 minutes. If you could just clarify that for us, then presumably if that does not carry the third reading will be put to a vote and it will carry.

If it does carry, it will go back to committee of the whole House, and presumably some amendments may be made or an attempt at some amendments will be made. Then it will come back again for third reading. I would assume at that time everybody can speak again.

Ms. E. J. Smith: If that is the correct interpretation, that indeed the speeches will still be open after the committee of the whole House, I am sure that is acceptable.

Mr. Speaker: I hope I can clarify the situation. All members, I am sure, are fully aware there is now a motion before the House for third reading of Bill 154. They are all aware of that. We are now open for debate on Bill 154. I suppose the members will have an opportunity to say in that debate whether they are going to support or oppose the third reading of Bill 154. Any member, when that member has the floor, has the opportunity to make an amendment to that motion.

According to standing order 62, "If a motion to recommit a bill is opposed"—and that is the question I would have to ask once that amendment is put—"no member shall speak thereon for a longer period than 10 minutes."

I will not go into the detail of what would happen if it was approved or disapproved. I think we will wait until that time comes, so I would now ask that we continue with the third reading debate of Bill 154. Does the parliamentary assistant—yes?

1540

Mr. Harris: I have one more point. Could you clear up for the deputy House leader and whip of the government party that, should all that take place, as we think history may unfold here in fact today, and this bill go through several days of committee of the whole House, as we think history will unfold, then the bill will come back again for third reading. I think the whip for the government party was concerned, at that time, about who then can speak when it comes back a second time for third reading. Maybe you could clarify that. My understanding is that everybody can speak all over again.

Mr. Speaker: I hope I am correct in responding that if the decision is taken that the

bill is recommitted to committee of the whole House, then it will be removed from Orders and Notices for third reading. If, at some later date, it comes back for third reading, then members will have the opportunity to speak. Am I correct in that? That is the way I would understand the situation.

Mr. Baetz: In view of the fact that it now appears as if there will be ample opportunity for all of us to address various aspects of this bill in this third reading and then when we go into committee and then ultimately, when we go back to third reading again, I shall be neither exhausting nor exhaustive in my comments, except simply perhaps to draw to the attention of the members some of the continuing concerns that our party has about certain aspects of this proposed legislation.

In the first instance, I would say that any piece of good legislation not only has to be understood, but it also has to be respected by those people who will be affected by it. Certainly, we have the very definite impression that there is one very important community out there, namely, the business community, that at this point in time does not understand all the aspects of this bill and certainly, the way the bill is now written, does not respect some aspects of this bill.

In fact, many members of the business community, to varying degrees, feel that parts of this bill are ridiculous and are ludicrous. I must say that we are very much inclined to agree with that point of view. In the fullness of time, when we get back to committee of the whole House—and I suspect that is the way we will be going; we know the New Democrats have indicated they will support the motion to get it back into committee of the whole House and certainly we will support it, so we have every reason to think it is going to go back to the committee of the whole House—we will be dealing with these aspects at greater length.

I might just say here, in saying that good legislation has to be not only respected but also understood, I found rather interesting, and I think other members of the committee probably also did, the report that was issued by the Canadian Press and appeared in the *Globe and Mail* this morning, headlined: "Purpose of Pay Equity Legislation is Found Confusing by Ontarians."

It goes on to say, and I will not read all of it: "Despite more than a year of debate over the province's proposed pay equity law, the vast majority of Ontario residents still appear confused about the issue."

"A recent Gallup poll done for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business found 87 per cent of Ontarians do not understand the purpose of the legislation, soon to be passed into law. Nationally, the results show 89 per cent of the respondents gave the wrong answer when asked what pay equity laws mean.

"Under the pay equity principle, workers receive the same wage for jobs, that, while not necessarily the same, are considered to be of equal value to the employer.

"More than 38 per cent in Ontario thought pay equity meant equal pay for equal work, a law that has been on the province's books since the early 1950s but has done little to close the...gap."

There is not only among the affected business community but certainly among the public and the population at large still a vast, vast amount of confusion as to what this bill is supposed to achieve.

I just wanted to touch on very briefly some of these aspects of the bill as it now stands and how it is seen and the concern that is out there in the business community about some of these aspects.

The one glaring example, and I am sure the parliamentary assistant over there already has a look of knowing what is coming about him, has to do with the construction industry of Ontario. It is certainly a very large industry, as I am sure the chief whip of the government party will know, having some acquaintance with the construction industry, but that industry looks at certain aspects of this piece of legislation and says it is ridiculous. It is ridiculous. It goes quite contrary to many of the features of the Ontario Labour Relations Act that are in effect right now, and I deal specifically with this whole issue of the fact that workers who are on construction site, who are construction site workers, that under the Labour Relations Act these workers are not treated in the same manner as employees of the construction industry who are off the construction site. That is the law. We passed it.

The construction industry has to operate under that particular law and yet in this particular instance here we are disregarding that, we are saying "Well, forget that," or we are mum about it, or we are ambiguous about it.

I tell you that when you propose to introduce legislation like that, that has got to be ridiculous in the eyes and the minds of a very respectable, large industry, then I think we have to do something about it.

Just to illustrate: in Toronto at the present time there is a lot of construction activity going on at

the domed stadium. Ellis-Don, that very reputable segment of the construction industry, is down there building the domed stadium.

The workers who are onsite down there are treated under our present legislation very differently from any construction employees who happen to work at Ellis-Don or some other construction company headquarters offsite.

And yet in this legislation we are saying "Disregard it. You are all going to be treated equally and the same in future." I ask, does that make sense? Are we not in a sense here becoming the laughingstock of the construction industry in insisting that they all be treated the same?

That is certainly one of the things we will be taking up later on when we get back into committee of the whole.

Another segment of the business community has to deal with companies like Canteen of Canada Ltd., Cara Operations Ltd., Eastwood Food Services Ltd., VS Services Ltd. and so on. These companies have been, from the time that we started our debate on this particular subject, trying to say this piece of legislation assumes that all of the business community here is organized, is made up of large, centralized employers like municipalities and large manufacturers and that we, the architects of the bill, have overlooked its impacts on smaller decentralized and diversified service businesses whose workforces are spread right across the province. They fear that they simply cannot comply the measures of this bill.

The fact is that in their operation, as they work in several distinct lines of business, in which their employees are working in a large number of separate work places scattered across the province, and they are saying it is going to be virtually impossible for a Cara Operations, an Eastwood, a VS Services or a Canteen of Canada that is carrying out various different services, in various different matters and under various organizations, that you cannot deal with these people as if they were a centralized, one-industry organization.

They have come to us time and again and said, "For heaven's sake, take another look as to whether in fact we can operate under this piece of legislation, which appears to be applicable to General Motors, Ford Motor Co. and other centralized groups, but which makes no sense for the diversified industry."

That is another area we will want to look at, and we intend to introduce amendments to deal with that ongoing concern.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the honourable member. You are referring to amendments; maybe they would best be discussed at some future time, if there is an opportunity. This is third reading of the bill, and you are to give reasons why you are for or against the bill.

Mr. Baetz: All right. I will not go into the amendments any further. I am simply indicating where we will be discussing amendments when we get into committee and why at this point we are opposing the bill—why we are unhappy with the bill, I would say.

Mr. Barlow: We are trying to improve on the bill.

Mr. Baetz: We are trying to improve it. I thank my colleague over there who has helped me very much in it.

I am keeping the Speaker's observations in mind here, and I will not go into details, but certainly another area we will be speaking to later on, not here, has to do with the fact that this piece of legislation should be administered under the Employment Standards Act and not set up a brand-new, independent, free-standing bureaucracy.

We have seen in the last year or two the very rapid growth of bureaucracy in this province. It does remind one of that burgeoning growth of the federal civil service that is finally being brought under control. Under this bill, we are simply planning to set up one more segment of bureaucracy, the Pay Equity Commission. We feel, and the business community feels rather strongly, that this could very logically fall under the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and within the Employment Standards Act.

The only argument we have heard about this not coming under the Employment Standards Act is that it is not a very effective branch, it is not being effectively administered with the work it has mandated to it today, and simply to add more responsibilities to it would be foolish. We will get into the reasons later on, but we frankly think there are ways to remedy that: simply improve the administration under the Employment Standards Act; do not just sort of throw the baby out with the bath water. If it is logical, if it is sensible, and business thinks it is and we think it is, then it should be placed under the administration of the Employment Standards Act.

The other concern we have with this piece of legislation—and again, as I say, legislation like this not only has to be understood but also has to be respected—is when we get down to this business of the job classes. We can accept the fact that we can identify a female job class or job

group where 60 per cent are female and a male job class where 70 per cent are male; but when we get down to how many people constitute a group, we find that in this piece of legislation—and it is no wonder we would like to improve it; that is, I think, the proper way to put it—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ward: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz) has not yet mentioned one item that was not discussed during the consideration of this bill by the standing committee on administration of justice after second reading. This is obviously not a third reading debate but just an attempt to forestall passage of the bill. I would ask that you bring the member to order on this.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I tried to draw to the attention of all members that because of the previous discussion there may be some action taken at a later date. However, it is third reading, and I am sure the honourable member will direct his remarks to third reading; that is, whether he is going to support or not support the motion for third reading of this bill.

Mr. Baetz: I thought I had made that point clear. If the parliamentary assistant wants to have a long, drawn-out debate on this bill, he will get it. We will talk on it for days when it gets back in the committee of the whole House, if that is what he wants, but we are trying to avoid that. I am not going to be repeating myself later on.

Anyway, as another reason we have real trouble with this piece of legislation, and as I was saying before I was interrupted by the parliamentary assistant, I want to finish up on the size of group. How many people? What is the minimum number of people who can be in a group? According to this piece of legislation, it is one person. The business community is saying: "That is ridiculous. How can you have a group of one?" We are inclined to agree. How can you have a group of one and appear to be sensible about this?

The final concern we have with this legislation is the fact that it gives such wide and sweeping powers for the implementation of the bill under the regulations. We can understand that one reason may well be that this is pioneering. It is new, it is complex; we have little to go by from other jurisdictions. If you cannot spell it out in legislation, you say, "Let us turn that responsibility over to those people who make the regulations and pass them." Presumably that is cabinet. I know other people feel this simply means that cabinet will have the responsibility of changing and interpreting this legislation before it ever gets

back into this House again. That is a point of real concern.

We have an even larger concern; that is, under the pressures of the day, cabinet may simply, more than is appropriate, turn those interpretative powers over to the proposed Pay Equity Commission to do what it likes about interpretation, so that in fact the implementation of this bill is going to rest largely in the hands of unelected, unseen, faceless bureaucrats. That is a point of concern and something we will be discussing at considerable length, as we hope to do if we get into committee.

With those very few and brief comments, as has been indicated, we will be supporting the motion, when it comes before us, that this bill will be going back into committee of the whole House.

1600

Ms. Gigantes: We have gone through a somewhat unusual procedure this afternoon. It might be useful for people who are here in the chamber with us to understand how this happened.

We had the very strange event that a member of the standing committee on administration of justice, who was neither the chairman nor the vice-chairman of the justice committee, reported this bill back to the House. While others of us who were on the committee watched in startled amazement, she suggested the bill be reported for third reading. We had an understanding that, quite naturally, there would be discussions on this bill in committee of the whole House.

In speaking in what has begun as a third reading debate, I would like to indicate on behalf of our party—certainly on behalf of myself and my colleague the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton), who sat on the justice committee—that we are very anxious to spend a little bit longer before completion of third reading debate of this bill in looking at the key elements of the legislation which in our view are still not satisfactory.

The principle we are discussing here is a very basic social issue. It is an issue of fundamental economic fairness for women and it is an issue this province has been discussing for well over 10 years. It is over 10 years now since a group formed of women's groups, of men and women in the labour movement, men and women in political parties and community groups around this province came together as the umbrella organization known as the Equal Pay Coalition. Their work over more than a decade led to a situation where, in a change of government with

the May 1985 election, there were two parties that had said going into the election they wanted to see equal pay for work of equal value.

We came out of that election with an agreement or an agenda for work in this parliament—an agreement supported by two parties, the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party—in which we said that in the first session of the Legislature we would see legislation tabled that would provide equal pay for work of equal value in both the public sector and the private sector in Ontario.

That did not happen. We have spent two years, in fact, getting to the point we are at now, where we finally have one bill that covers both sectors. We have a bill that, having been the subject of many representations before the justice committee, has been amended in minor form, not to our satisfaction. It is a bill which still provides large areas of exemption and exclusion in terms of the coverage and protection it will provide that will give some element of pay fairness to women in this province.

It is a bill which has stagings and timings built into it so that the effectiveness of what is in the legislation, limited as that may be, is going to be drawn out over many, many years for whatever influence it will have on the work situation and the pay that women receive in this province.

We are not satisfied with that and we think it worth the extra few hours to have consideration of committee of the whole House so this House can in all seriousness sit down and think about the very basic framework it wants for this kind of legislation in the years to come. This is legislation that women will live with and live under for many years.

We certainly do not take the approach that has just been suggested by the member for Ottawa West on behalf of his party and as the spokesman these days for what is called the pay equity committee of the Conservative caucus, they having lost a very forthright spokesperson on behalf of women from their caucus in the course of their meanderings all over the face of this bill. It is clear they are still not sure whether they are in favour of equal pay for work of equal value or indeed whether they are in favour of even such a limited concept as we see laid out in this legislation, which is called pay equity.

There are exclusions and exemptions in the bill. There is drawn-out staging and timing. There is a question of whether employers or employees are going to pay the costs that will be incurred for equal pay adjustments to women who can establish a right to equal pay adjust-

ments under this legislation; the bill now provides that employers can shift those costs to employees by restraining annual wage increases so that the restraint they exercise on wage increases can be shifted over to make so-called pay equity adjustments.

We think that is a very inadequate way of dealing with what is supposed to be a very basic change in the way each employer in each work place looks at payment of his or her employees. We think employers, having benefited for years from underpaying women for work that has comparable value in terms of its skill, effort, responsibility and the conditions under which it is done—comparable value to that done by men for the same employer—should now finally undertake the obligation to pay fairly for the work that women are doing.

It is important to remember too that if employees end up paying for pay equity adjustments, it is the very women for whom this whole legislation is being created who are being asked to carry some of that burden. I think we still have to look at that question seriously.

When an employer is called upon to make a pay equity adjustment, that employer can charge that as a tax deduction, as a cost of business—the cost of wages is a cost of business—and that employer is allowed to deduct that for income tax purposes. Why then, given that situation, should employers not now finally accept whatever responsibility we put on them to provide fair pay in this legislation?

This is not the kind of legislation I would have hoped to see. It is not effective legislation at this stage. I think, however, there are amendments that can be considered in the final analysis by this Legislature before we come to a decision on third reading that would substantially improve the effectiveness of this legislation and would substantially mean that women in this province would receive real benefits under the legislation.

Some of the women we have thought about most in considering this legislation on behalf of our party are women who are very often the most underpaid, the most vulnerable in terms of their work situation and the most in need of this kind of legislation. They are women who work part-time. They are women who may be women of a visible minority origin; women who, because of the way they look, because of their backgrounds, because of the colour of their skin, can be identified as a minority group; women who may not yet have had access to full language training if they have immigrated from another country.

There are thousands and thousands of women who work, not by their choice, in extremely vulnerable positions in Ontario. Indeed, of the two million women who are working for pay in Ontario right now, fully 500,000 are working part-time.

This legislation says it will provide protection and assistance for women to ensure they get pay fairness even if they are working part-time, but it also provides an exemption which allows employers to change the nature of their hiring pattern and the nature of the timing of their work, because it encourages them to say, "This woman is not really a part-time worker on a regular basis; this woman is really a casual worker." A casual worker does not count under this legislation, does not count in terms of job comparisons under this legislation and does not qualify for wage adjustments under this legislation.

Is it enough that in 1987 we say to the employers of this province: "Here; there are 500,000 employees who are working part-time. They are women, and you do not have to count them in here if you do not want to. Just shift them from regular part-time work to what we call casual on-call work, and then you do not have to include them under any of the motions you make to comply with this legislation."

That is an open invitation to employers, and it is one that I think this Legislature has to look at again. It is just too dangerous to leave that lying there in the bill as an exemption, an invitation for employers to use. It can in fact undermine the work situation of women who are in the most vulnerable positions in the work force in Ontario. I do not think this Legislature truly wants to do that, and I think and I hope this Legislature will support amendment to that question.

1610

There are a number of other matters which we have attempted to formulate in as simple and clear phraseology as possible for purpose of amendment directly to key sections of this bill, so that this bill will in fact provide some of what has been promised to the women of Ontario, even though we are not satisfied with a bill that says it is bringing about a formula called pay equity. We would like to see a bill that established a mechanism which would be an ongoing mechanism to provide equal pay for work of equal value. That is quite a different kind of concept from the formulistic approach that is put forward in this bill.

Even though we are not enormously happy with Bill 154, we could support Bill 154 with much broader heart if this Legislature could, in

all seriousness, sit down and look at some of the key, critical matters that are the heart of this legislation and really at the core of determining whether it is going to be effective and whether it is going to be a real help to the women of Ontario.

For all those reasons, I am hopeful that the motion which we expect to come from our wonderful House leader—

Mr. Speaker: There is no motion yet.

Ms. Gigantes: —will find favour with members of the Legislature and that we will indeed have an opportunity to put amendments to this legislation.

Mr. McClellan: I do not believe there are any other speakers in the third reading debate, Mr. Speaker. If there are any other members who wanted to participate in the debate—

Mr. Barlow: Go ahead.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. McClellan moves that the motion for third reading of Bill 154 be amended by deleting all the words after the word “that” and substituting the following therefor:

“Bill 154, an Act to provide for Pay Equity be not now read a third time but be recommitted to committee of the whole House for the purpose of reconsidering the clauses of the bill.”

Mr. Speaker: Is there any discussion? The member for Bellwoods, and I would remind the member that he may speak for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. McClellan: I do not intend to abuse the hospitality of the House. I do want to indicate that it is normal procedure that a bill, especially a long, complicated bill such as this one which has completed its clause-by-clause stage in standing committee, to be reported back to the House and sent to committee of the whole for further clause-by-clause consideration.

On the day this particular bill was reported back to the House, it was not reported by either the chairman or the vice-chairman of the standing committee on administration of justice but was reported by the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan).

Quite frankly, since the member for Oriole had no business to be reporting the bill in the first place, it was not noticed by members of the opposition that the bill was being reported and ordered for third reading. Normally, when that kind of inadvertence occurs, the House leaders simply agree out of courtesy, by mutual consent, to send the bill back to the committee of the whole House for the normal clause-by-clause consideration. For whatever reason, the government House leader refused to do that on this occasion, I assume guided by the truculence and intransigence of the Attorney General (Mr.

Scott), who has displayed uncommon pique, arrogance and incivility in the course of the discussion, debate and consideration of this particular bill.

I assume that his annoyance at being challenged by such upstarts as members of the opposition had something to do with his unwillingness to permit the additional democratic debate, the additional democratic process of putting forward amendments, arguing pro and con and then bringing them to a vote. For the life of me, I am baffled and amazed at a minority Liberal government which has so little respect for democratic traditions and practices that it would attempt to prevent the opposition from having a clause-by-clause debate of such an important bill in committee of the whole House.

Mr. Runciman: You would not get that from a Tory government.

Mr. McClellan: Fortunately, my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative Party have, I think, a keener sense of the proprieties of a parliament and a better sense of what makes a parliament and a democratic government function than our friends in the Liberal Party seem to have. So I have some assurance that when this motion is put to a vote in a very few minutes it will carry, and we will go back to committee of the whole House and have the kind of democratic debate on amendments, pro and con, which characterizes parliamentary government and parliamentary democracy.

I do not know what the Liberal government is afraid of. I do not know what the Liberal government's problem is with an additional two days of debate on these important amendments. I do not know what the Liberal government is so fearful of. Is their position so weak that they are afraid to have it scrutinized for even an additional two days? Is their position so fragile that they cannot stand the scrutiny of debate? What is the problem over there? What is the Liberal government afraid of? If they are not afraid to exclude a quarter of a million women from coverage under this bill, perhaps they are afraid of the scrutiny of debate on that account.

I cannot account for the difficulty of my colleagues in the Liberal Party, but again I am confident that our democratic traditions will prevail, that this motion will carry and that, as I said, we will have an additional two days of debate on this important bill, and then it will proceed through the normal process to a third and final reading.

Mr. Ward: I am very disappointed to have to participate in the debate. I am very disappointed

that the House leader of the third party has reflected that his party's wish, after all this time, is to not move forward with pay equity legislation but, in fact, to move backward.

The member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) talked at some length about the fear of scrutiny with regard to this legislation. I would remind him of a little bit of the process that was undertaken over the course of the past nearly two years now in trying to develop legislation on an issue as complex as the one before us today.

Some time ago, we established labour advisory groups, business advisory groups, that travelled throughout the province to get the input of many of the groups and individuals that would be affected by this legislation. They received over 240 submissions.

Subsequent to that, the standing committee on administration of justice held its hearings on Bill 105, the public sector part, pay equity legislation. Over 60 submissions were heard there.

1620

During the course of the consideration of the clause-by-clause debate on Bill 154, there was no attempt by anyone to limit the debate, not from this party and not from any other party. There were no limits put on the debate whatsoever. Over the course of five weeks, we again heard submissions from many groups and individuals and took into account their comments and concerns about the specifics of Bill 154. We had a very long and drawn-out debate on clause-by-clause consideration.

At the end of that process, the committee reported the bill, with no proviso that it go into committee of the whole House. The first we heard of this was at some point—obviously, the third party felt it was asleep at the switch, and for some unknown reason they now choose that this legislation not proceed, perhaps for reasons unknown to me.

I can think of no reason the third party now wants to move backwards, not forwards. One can only suspect that it might suit some political agenda, but how can the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) in the same breath complain about the length of time it has taken in this debate and at the same moment support a motion that would not move this bill ahead but in fact move it backwards? Obviously, they are not prepared to proceed.

I was interested in the comments from the member for Ottawa West. He put forward a lot of the issues he would like to see debated in committee of the whole House. Not one item he mentioned was not considered at length by the

standing committee on administration of justice. Not one of the points made by the member for Ottawa Centre was not discussed, debated and voted on in the justice committee during consideration after second reading.

Frankly, it absolutely baffles me that at this moment there seems to be some political agenda driving the opposition parties, some fear of proceeding with this legislation. Frankly, it distresses me greatly to see political advantage being taken, at the expense of the working women of this province, to further delay this legislation.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Harris: I too am very disappointed to have to participate in this debate. I am astounded, though, at the comments of the member for Wentworth North (Mr. Ward).

The reason for this debate is that for some reason or other, on this particular bill—and if anybody is afraid to look at this bill it is the government, because it has tried to whip this through into third reading without it first going through committee of the whole House. I suggest this is the very first occasion that I can recall, after having been here for a little more than six years, the very first occasion since 1981, since I was elected, when any government has attempted to stifle debate in this Legislature, has attempted to run roughshod over people and bypass a very important stage and step in the House, that being a look by committee of the whole House before a bill goes forward for third reading.

The member for Wentworth North talks about the eight or nine or 10 people in the justice committee who had an opportunity to go through this bill, but he seems to have ignored that there are 125 elected people in this Legislature and the committee-of-the-whole process is there just for that purpose.

We have never had a government that I can recall, and maybe some others will remind me, we have never had a House leader who has said: "No, we will not let you do this in committee of the whole House. It has been ordered for third reading." I have never heard that come forward. I have never heard the House leader for the third party say "No" when we have said: "You know, this bill has been whipped through, going for third reading. We have a couple of things we'd like to do in committee. What do you think?" They have never said "No" when that request has been made by our party or the third party. We have never said "No" to that type of request, that

I can recall. Certainly on any bill that I can ever recall, the government House leader has never said "No," until this bill.

If anybody has any concerns about this particular bill, it is the government and the message that has been relayed through to the government House leader. Quite frankly, I do not think he is that insensitive to the House. However, I guess he gets his marching orders from the Premier (Mr. Peterson).

Ms. Fish: He did not used to be that insensitive.

Mr. Harris: I honestly do not think that it is entirely he who is that insensitive. I think it is the Premier who has ordered him to become insensitive. "To heck with what the opposition parties want to do. We are going to whip this through for third reading before anybody can get a look at the specific aspects of the bill."

I want to get that on the record. It really was not the reason I rose, but the supercilious, pompous comments by the member for Wentworth North prompted me to get those few comments on the record as well.

I want to indicate why we think this should be in committee of the whole House. I am disappointed that we have to go through this route of supporting this resolution, but I want to tell the members some of the reasons we are supporting this resolution.

During the committee stage, we found massive confusion by the staff of the government, who did not know answers to many questions. The minister did not know. The staff did not know. You can figure out where the heck the parliamentary assistant would have been in the process, because he is down below all of those. There were a number of issues in which we had difficulty getting answers to questions as it went through that process.

Second, I want to tell the House that in my opinion the business community's views were not given enough of an airing—certainly were not given enough of an understanding—and I doubt that members of the government party understood some of the concerns and the views that the business community was putting forward.

We understand the anxiety of the government to get any pay equity bill through rather than getting the right pay equity bill through; we understand that political agenda. There is no doubt there is a political agenda, by the example of the refusal to deal with this in committee of the whole House, without the opposition having to combine and force it there. That is indication of a political agenda.

I would suggest to the House that it is a political agenda and it is an agenda to be able to hold up a pay equity bill and say, "It's through, it's passed," without really giving serious thought about whether it is the right pay equity bill, whether it is going to work, whether it is sensitive to the needs both of the business community, which is going to have to make it work, and of the workers, the employees, the unions and the women we hope this bill will help.

We moved very important amendments in the committee. We feel they were important, we feel they were substantive, but we feel they were perhaps not understood by everyone. Therefore, we want the opportunity to put these amendments again. I am astounded that there is one party in this Legislature that is afraid to have a look at those amendments again, to have them debated again and voted on again.

I suspect that is the political agenda. There are some members in the government party who do not want to stand up and be counted. We are going to give them that opportunity to stand up and be counted, even though, for some reason or other, they want to whip through it and not have that opportunity.

I urge those members who thought that through some procedural method they could escape that and could say, "Gee, could we just whip this through so that I do not have to actually stand up and speak and show where I stand on these issues? Please, Mr. House Leader, please Mr. Premier, find somewhere I can hide. Find some way I can hide and not have to get involved in this;" I urge those members to seize upon the opportunity I am going to give them and the members of the third party are going to give them to take a really good look at this piece of legislation.

1630

In the short amount of time left to me, if my colleagues from all three parties will let me get one other point on the record, I also want to say, and I think it is important the people of Ontario know and everybody in this Legislature knows, we could have pay equity in the public sector today. We could have had it two years ago. We could have had it one year ago. We could have had it six months ago. There is nothing stopping the government from being fair in the negotiations.

We do not need a bill—that is a proposal put forward by this party in the last campaign—to proceed immediately with pay equity in the public sector. That was a proposal, put through to break this logjam while this bill went on for a

couple of years: to proceed immediately. I think the public has a right to know and understand that there is nothing saying the government cannot proceed with pay equity in the public sector. In fact, this party has encouraged it to do so, and the third party, to its credit on this particular issue, has encouraged government to do so for longer than that.

There is no reason that could not be done, and we could then take the time to look at what we are really doing with pay equity in the private sector. But the government has got to rush this bill through for some reason, even though it does not take effect in the private sector for three years: three years, because the government will not proceed, as it can and as we have told it to do and we have suggested it do, with pay equity in the public sector right now.

We will be supporting this motion and I urge all members to pay attention to the amendments we will be putting forward.

Ms. Gigantes: It is hard to credit the words we heard from the member for Wentworth North, the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General and the minister responsible for women's issues. It is really hard to credit it.

This party has managed to put off month after month over a year, then up to Christmas of this past year, before it got itself unwound and on track to deal with legislation affecting the private sector, and to finally sort out the fact it could do the public sector and the private sector equal pay legislation in one bill, which we had told it a year and a half before.

It finally got on track, it finally agreed. We took the initiative this year, after Christmas, to sit down with the government and say: "When are you going to hold the hearings? Let us get this schedule off the ground because otherwise we are not going to get legislation passed before this summer."

Frankly, we were afraid it was not going to want to pass the legislation. We had good reason to be afraid. It had dragged its feet month after month after month; it would not table legislation; the excuses; the committees; the interministerial working groups; the advisory groups; the public hearings—there was not a thing it did not do to delay this moment.

Now we are asking for a very brief time in this Legislature—two days is the proposal being put forward by the other two parties—to debate amendments which are clear. Our amendments were circulated to both other parties last Thursday. The parliamentary assistant says we are looking to move backwards. We want to move

forward to a better bill. This bill is not adequate. If he will just take the wool out of his ears and listen one more time to why the amendments we are going to propose again are amendments that he should be supporting this time, it will be to the benefit of women in this province for a long time to come.

Mr. Ward: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Ottawa Centre made some references to some limiting facts within this motion. I do not see where the debate was limited to—

Mr. Speaker: Under what standing order would that come?

Mr. Ward: I am not sure.

Mr. Speaker: You are not sure. I am not sure either. That is not a point of order.

Mr. Rae: I can only say that the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General knows perfectly well there have been very active discussions between the House leaders, and indeed between the critics, with respect to what should be done with this bill at this stage. He knows perfectly well, or if he does not he is singularly ill-informed and has not bothered to find out or he has not been told because he is not in on the decisions that are being taken.

Mr. McClellan: He is not one of the Big Four.

Mr. Rae: Or the Big One in this case. He does not know, so he stands up and says, "I am not aware." That is fine. He has just publicized the fact that he does not know what he is talking about.

I think the record will show the ink was scarcely dry on that section of the accord which said equal pay in the public and the private sectors before the Liberal Party started to back away from that promise and back away from that commitment. All we have seen in this House for the last two years is a Liberal Party that is unwilling and unable to do what it said it would do. I think it is perfectly clear to all members in this—

Mr. D. R. Cooke: All right. Let's go to the polls. Let the people decide.

Mr. Rae: All right, let the people decide. I have no problem with that. I said to the Premier a while ago: "If you want to go, go ahead. Fine. I have no problem with that." I say that to the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke) right now.

Mr. Breaugh: Get out the cruiser. Start it up, Ken.

Mr. Rae: That is right. We will be glad. We have a Minister of Health who has the time to raise \$200 a shot—a tollgate practice to get in to meet the Minister of Health—and he has not even had the common decency in a year and a half to sit down and talk to the nursing home workers in the province. That is the quality of the Liberal Party. That spoke more eloquently than any speech I have ever heard in this assembly with respect to the true character of the Liberal Party. It is prepared to hob-nob with those people who have \$200 a shot and come across with \$200, but it is not prepared to sit down with the working people of this province to talk about their working conditions. That is the quality of the Liberal Party. That is what the Liberal Party is all about.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not know. Is the member aware of the motion? Would you like me to read the motion?

Mr. Breaugh: This is one of the nuances.

Mr. Rae: I was referring to the Minister of Health by way of example in relation to the particular motion that is before us.

I want to say with respect to the equal pay matter that it has been the most incredible period of green papers, of white papers, of consultation, of backgrounding, of deep backgrounding, of throwing things back on the back burner and back on the back of the back burner. Then when we ask the House leader and when we ask the Liberal Party, why do we not let the public see what amendments are being discussed so that debate can be crystallized in this House for two days on the particulars that are before us, what do the Liberals say? "No. No way, we do not want to have that debate. We want to ram it through." We say no to that kind of behaviour.

They held up this legislation. They held up any introduction of legislation for a year and three quarters and they are not going to deprive the people of Ontario of the chance to see just what a bunch of reactionary people they really are when it comes to these amendments. We think it is time the people were able to see that, and that is why we are going to be supporting the motion so brilliantly manoeuvred by my colleague the member for Bellwoods.

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Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? Are you all aware of the motion—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Mr. McClellan has moved that the motion for third reading of Bill

154 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor, so that it would read, "Bill 154, An Act to provide for Pay Equity, be not now read a third time but be recommitted to the committee of the whole House for the purpose of reconsidering the clauses of the bill."

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the member for Haldimand-Norfolk had the floor. Does the member wish to continue?

Mr. G. I. Miller: Yes, I certainly do. It gives me a lot of pleasure to rise again and speak on the budget debate. Peculiar things are unfolding around the Legislature. I would like to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that a week ago—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the member, but if any members are departing, would they depart quietly?

Mr. G. I. Miller: A week ago today, we were speaking on the budget debate and bringing to the attention of this Legislature the things we have done to assist agriculture. I believe that was where we left off.

I had the opportunity of going to the ball game last Wednesday night. My buddy there, who I happened to be sitting beside, was the leader of the third party. That is the first time we sat on the same bench, cheering for the same team, and it was an excellent ball game, and were viewing the same lines.

The budget that was brought in by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) has certainly improved to some degree the financial assistance to the farming community. The improved farm tax rebate, plus new programs to promote farm safety and land stewardship, are provided for in the 1987 Ontario budget. Spending by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food is expected to pass the half-billion mark in the current fiscal year, from \$475 million last year to a budget of \$563 million in 1987-88. This represents a 72 per cent increase in farm funding

since our government took office less than two years ago, in 1985.

In the budget speech, the Treasurer said that low commodity prices, declining farm asset values and high debt loads are still squeezing Ontario's agriculture sector. As one who has been working closely with agriculture, I certainly realize that.

The programs we have put in place, the replacement of the 60 per cent tax rebate on farm property tax with a 100 per cent rebate on the farm land and outbuildings, with farm residences taxed separately as farm property, are changes valued at \$18 million and represent a 17 per cent increase in the total value of farm tax rebates.

Only last Thursday night, the Treasurer and I had the opportunity of going to Dunnville to a very exciting meeting to inform the residents there of how the farm tax assistance is going to assist the communities across Ontario. As I said before, the region of Haldimand-Norfolk is reviewing its assessment because of the devaluation of farm land, particularly in the tobacco area, and this has created a lot of misunderstanding. But when the dust has settled, I am sure taxes in all parts of rural Ontario will go down. Particularly in my riding in the region of Haldimand-Norfolk, taxes will be decreasing rather than increasing.

This will be done on a fair basis. It is important that legislation was brought into this Legislature only a couple of weeks ago through Bill 6, indicating the assessment will be carried out and giving the authority to the municipality. I just want to share with those people in the town of Dunnville, in the town of Haldimand and in the region of Haldimand-Norfolk, that taxes will be going down, but under the 1984-85 assessment it will be done on actual value.

Another program that has been put in place to assist the farming community is the introduction of a three-year, \$40-million land stewardship program to encourage sound land management and environmental protection. The program will help farmers restore soil productivity and reduce environmental damage. When we have overproduction and prices that do not reflect the cost of production, it is important that we bring in programs to protect the environment and our water resources because that is so important, not only to our future but also for the future generations that take over our responsibility.

There is \$50 million for a new farm management safety and repair program. Under this program, the government will pay up to \$2,500 per farmer to encourage farm safety, improve

farm management and help defray costs of machine repairs and grain storage facilities. All farmers who gross at least \$12,000 a year will be eligible for this program. It certainly should give some assistance to farmers in providing good storage facilities so they have good-quality grain or whatever they are storing—corn, soy beans and grain—because quality is so important to meet the prices in any market. Quality obviously comes to the surface as being beneficial to everyone concerned.

We also announced the extension of several farm programs. The beginning farmer assistance program will be extended for a further five years. The Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, OFFIRR, will be maintained at the 100 per cent level instead of being cut back to 70 per cent as was originally planned. I think that plan has been utilized by more farmers than any other plan that has been put in place. We are proud that the farmers are using it and that it is being successful.

I would like to read to the members of the Legislature some of the comments made by farm leaders around the province after the budget was introduced. Farmers are pleased with a provincial budget that boosts agriculture spending to more than half a billion dollars, up 18 per cent over last year. They say it will not save the hundreds of Ontario farmers facing bankruptcy, but "They did a pretty good job with what they had to work with," said Brigid Pyke, president of the 26,000 farmer members of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, "and they have a sense of fiscal responsibility. We realize that the programs are not going to save all the farmers, but we certainly want to save as many as we can and stabilize the industry as much as we can." This was a statement by Brigid Pyke, president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, in an article in the *Hamilton Spectator*.

Another headline read, "Fellow Farmer Coming Through for Province's Food Producers." This is referring to the Treasurer. "Ontario food producers are delighted with the provincial budget their fellow farmer, Treasurer Robert Nixon, read Wednesday in the Legislature. 'I do not see how we could be more pleased,' said Terry Daynard, general manager of the Ontario Corn Producers' Association. 'Agriculture is getting quite a share of the windfall profits from the economic boom,' said Bill Jorgen, president of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario."

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I might indicate that while there may be and has been a boom in urban areas and in many

sectors of the economy, agriculture has taken the brunt. With the programs we have been able to put in place, in which I had a role to play and made recommendations to the Treasurer, who took up those recommendations, we feel confident the agricultural industry will strengthen. Working along with our federal friends, with the other provinces across this great country of ours, and not only across our country but around the world, agriculture again will gain the growth in the economy it requires, because food is the basic requirement. Even though we have overproduction at the present time, there are a lot of hungry people who require that food and it is important that we work on a world basis to make sure they have access to it. The surplus can soon disappear. It takes just one bad season in any one particular part of the world and the food supply can diminish very quickly.

I feel that with proper management, the farmer does play an important role in all parts of rural Ontario and in Ontario generally. If he can buy and replace equipment, it makes jobs. I think it is so important that we try to stimulate that as much as we can, to strengthen that industry at the legislative level. We are pleased to have had a role to play. The Treasurer has seen fit to support this great industry and we have the support of the Premier (Mr. Peterson).

I would like to give other members an opportunity to respond to the budget, and I will close now by saying it has been a pleasure to work with a government that has been so co-operative, that wants to work with the people and wants input from the farming community, not only from the farming community but also from everyone across this great province, to resolve the difficult problems we have to face, to share those responsibilities and rewards with everyone in the province. It is a pleasure to be part of that team.

Mr. Sheppard: I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in the debate of the May 1987 budget. Previous to the budget presentation, I was thinking the Treasurer must be quite used to the task by now, this being his third budget. I would like to make a comment about the red trillium. Seeing that late Premier Mitchell Hepburn brought in the white trillium in 1937, I just cannot understand why the Treasurer decided to bring in a red trillium. I want to read a couple of comments.

According to the Macmillan Wild Flower Book, "Because the red trillium has such an unpleasant odour, its more popular name is the stinking Benjamin." I am just wondering if that is

what our Treasurer was thinking when he brought in that red trillium. It says here, in a horticultural book, "Note: The white trillium is the most striking of the species and traditionally regarded as the blossom of peace and hope." I wonder whether the Treasurer wanted to get out of the blossom of peace and hope and if that is why he brought in that stinking red trillium.

I am surprised he would go against his own party which back in 1937 brought in the white trillium. I am very surprised the Treasurer would do that.

Mr. Pollock: When you get a red trillium, it is starting to die.

Mr. Sheppard: The Liberal Party over there is starting to die, after bringing that one in.

At first glance, the figures announced in the budget appeared impressive, until you read further that the same funds were to be stretched over a period of three years and some even over a period of six years. Once again, I was quite disappointed in the budgetary policy as set out in this year's budget or, perhaps more to the point, this quarter budget. It is no secret that most of us anticipate an election some time in the not-too-distant future, although the Premier is playing the "I've got a secret but I'm not telling" game for all it is worth. I am sure he is enjoying it, since that this is the first time he has such authoritative powers over the people of Ontario.

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that this budget is in preparation for this upcoming election. When economic times are at an all-time high right now, the Treasurer could have done a number of things that would have put this province ahead for the bad times we all know will come again. This budget does nothing to better our future; instead, it looks to the next few months to make the government look as good as it possibly can. Primarily, and what concerns us all, the Treasurer could have eliminated this province's deficit. He could have been remembered historically as the Treasurer who wiped out the provincial deficit. No one, not one person, would have forgotten that.

He could have eliminated all our transportation problems throughout the province, while at the same time providing employment and increased tourism, not to mention facilities in trade, when many of us are getting correspondence from constituents expressing their fears about free trade. This government has not even provided one red cent to help the federal government negotiators plan a deal that will benefit this province. This proves either that the Premier does not care how Ontario fares in

negotiations with the United States or that this budget is merely a preparatory measure to the anticipated election.

In the throne speech this government promised to create an education system that would set high standards in helping students to reach their full potential. I quote from the throne speech: "We will soon announce details of a major new capital funding program to eliminate overcrowded classrooms and modernize our education facilities."

In one of our local papers last week there appeared a letter to the editor from a grandmother who was completely devastated by conditions in the so-called school her five-year-old grandson was attending. The grandson made reference to a family of rats living under his portable classroom and how the rats would come out to watch the students. The grandmother thought perhaps her grandson was exaggerating a little, as young boys have a tendency to do, but decided to do some investigating on her own after she had heard some older children talking about the rats too. To her utter shock and dismay, families of rats actually do live under several of the nine portable classrooms, and the principal goes on rat patrol before the children leave the portables.

Furthermore, the conditions are deplorable. The school was built to accommodate 80 students, now has over 200 students and in the fall there will be 215 students, not taking into account those enrolled for this fall. There is not even enough water to flush the toilets, for crying out loud, because the facility was not built for 200 students.

These conditions in our primary schools comment on the horror story—

Mr. Mancini: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I bring to your attention and to the attention of the member for Northumberland (Mr. Sheppard) that standing order 19(d)4 states that a member shall be called to order "if he...in the opinion of the Speaker, refers at length to debates of the current session, or reads unnecessarily from verbatim reports of the Legislative debates or any other document," meaning that is out of order.

I want to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that the member has now read verbatim from what I counted as a minimum of four, possibly five, pages and it appears he intends to read the entire reply to the budget speech verbatim from a speech some researcher has prepared for him.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. D. R. Cooke): The member for Northumberland will take note of the admonition and refer to his notes sparingly.

Mr. Sheppard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Treasurer with his tremendous windfall of money could have a massive investment in the education system. What about the gaps between high schools and elementary schools, as opposed to the grants for secondary schools? This was one of the promises of the 1985 election; they were going to provide 60 per cent of educational costs to the elementary and secondary schools, but today it is 46 per cent. I do not believe that with the \$1.2-billion windfall, this government could not fulfil its promise of funding the 60 per cent.

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I also want to say you can tell how they feel, because I spoke to some of these people the other weekend, and they are damned mad because this government is not providing the education needs and the money they deserve to fix up our schools across Ontario, let alone in the great riding of Northumberland.

I just want to mention that the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) should come down to Northumberland, because it is the best riding in Ontario. Even the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) comes up through the great riding of Northumberland and says it is the best scenic drive in the fall that there is in Ontario. I would like to remind the member for Essex South, if he ever wants to have a nice scenic drive, to come down and drive down Highway 45 between Cobourg and Norwood.

Mr. Poirier: They have the biggest rats.

Mr. Sheppard: I would say that the biggest rat comes from Essex South.

Perhaps the government party never believed it would ever have the opportunity to govern and therefore—

Mr. Mancini: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think the honourable member would probably want to withdraw what he said.

Mr. Sheppard: Is that in the book there? If he can prove it to me, I will gladly withdraw it, but it is not an uncomplimentary remark. It has been said several times this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker: The Speaker would rule that there was no particular personal reference to anyone. The member for Northumberland has the floor.

Mr. Sheppard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mancini: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: There was a reference to my constituency, and the people of Essex South are very fine people. I will have no member insult the constituents of Essex South the way the member for Northumberland has, as I choose not to insult

his constituents or the constituents of any other member. I ask him to please consider what he said.

Mr. Sheppard: I did not refer to the people from Essex South.

The Acting Speaker: The Speaker is of the view that the member was referring to a certain animal and not to people. He may carry on.

Mr. Sheppard: Thank you. Perhaps the government party never believed it would ever have the opportunity to govern and therefore made rash promises it never thought it would have to keep. How could this government claim that its top priority is to improve the quality of education in Ontario when it cannot even keep up with a two-year-old election promise?

What is more, I know many people, including myself, were hoping to see the realization of yet another campaign promise made in 1985, and that is with respect to child care. Whatever happened to the comprehensive new policy on child care of two years ago? What happened to the accord commitment to make day care a universal right?

The budget states, "This issue is not confined to Ontario." Quite frankly, anyone could have informed this government of that fact two years ago. It is merely an excuse then, because the minister has not seen fit to do his homework with respect to the needs of the people of Ontario. I grant you that day care is a national issue, but we should not be waiting for the federal government to tell us what to do.

This budget makes no provision for direct financing of its day care facilities. Instead, it provides \$26 million for day care initiatives, which is equivalent to about 5,000 new spaces. At 5,000 spaces per year, it will take many years before we reach the 100,000 spaces the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) was noted to say of the provincial need.

Furthermore, not one word was spoken against this budget with respect to rural child care, and once again the government totally ignored the thousands of middle-income families who cannot afford the high cost of day care and are not eligible for subsidization.

As I said earlier, the Treasurer could have eliminated our transportation problems throughout the province with this wonderful \$1.2 billion. One does not have to be a mathematics whiz to realize that after we take away the \$130 million already allocated to the greater Toronto area, there is not much left for the remainder of this province to address vital road and transit

requirements, especially when this amount is divided up to cover the next three years.

The \$28 million allocated to municipal roads alone is a far cry from the \$75 million deemed essential by the Ontario Good Roads Association in order to arrest the deterioration of our municipal roads infrastructure. It only makes common sense that the longer we wait to repair roads, which are so essential to commerce, agriculture and tourism, the more expensive and extensive rehabilitation work will have to be.

Had I not known the Treasurer had some farming background, I would never have guessed it by his lack of sensitivity to the farming community. I am not saying the Treasurer could have wiped out all the farmers' problems with his magic wand, because we all know the difficulties our farmers have been faced with in the last few years. What I am saying, however, is that the Treasurer could have implemented a program that would have given hope of some relief to our farmers, a program that would have ensured our farmers a fair and reasonable return for their products.

An alternative such as the Family Farm Security Act would have been expensive, but our farmers would have had a chance to compete and prosper. Instead, the budget introduced a \$50-million farm management, safety and repairs program. Quite honestly, what good will a \$2,500 grant be to improve farm management techniques when the banks are foreclosing on the family farm? Really, where is the logic here? That is almost as wonderful as the program that paid farmers to get off the land.

On the 100 per cent rebate on farms, I might say that the previous government discussed it in 1983 and 1984. I do not think it is going to make the farmers happy when they get their tax bill next year. Anybody who has a new house and one acre of land with a new garage on it is going to be paying more taxes than he is at the present time. I think it is a bad policy for this government to bring in a 100 per cent rebate on one's taxes, because there will be people going out and buying a farm with no house on it, and they are going to get all their taxes back. I do not think that is fair, and I hope that maybe the Treasurer and the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) will look into it in the future and correct that mistake.

I have not even touched on the mere \$5-million-per-year allowance for eastern Ontario. This pittance is a complete insult to the residents of eastern Ontario. This government claims to realize the importance of tourism to local

economies, yet it chose to provide again a mere \$5 million to the Destinations North and Destinations East programs. With 14 counties in eastern Ontario and the city of Ottawa, what is \$25 million over a five-year period?

The Treasurer could have achieved so much for the people of Ontario with this budget. He could have put us ahead of the game for the rainy days that will undoubtedly come. Instead, he chose to squander our resources of funds. I believe the Treasurer abused his position to make his budget the best election budget ever, with enough money to keep the announcements of grants and so-called new programs coming until the election is called.

This truly is an unacceptable budget from this government. It does not plan for the future beyond the next few months. This government showed its true colours to the people of Ontario by displaying what it perceives to be of primary importance; that is, winning the fall election.

This government is a disappointment to the people of this province. I am sure the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) is going to be receiving more delegations, because we were promised that Highway 30, for the last 9.3 kilometres south of Campbellford, would be fixed. It is a disgrace. There have been delegations in to me and there have been delegations go to see the minister and he just does not seem to care about the roads. The roads are deteriorating very fast. I suggest the roads could have been fixed up much, much more with more money. That \$1.2 billion—I was going to say gift to this government—should have been put to better use.

1710

Mr. Ramsay: It is a pleasure to rise today to speak on the budget. I am sorry some of my colleagues from the north are not here because I have listened to most of the northern members speak on the budget. I am very disappointed that all we hear is gloom and doom from the northern members in regard to the budget and economic conditions in general in the north. If I were a person considering living in northern Ontario or as a northerner myself and I just had the information I heard from the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) or the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) in regard to northern Ontario, with such a bleak picture being painted, I would not want to be living in the north and I would not want to move to the north.

I want to bring to this House what is going on in the north. What is going on is that we are in an era of transition. We no longer have to rely on the

jobs of the big multinationals because those companies now are withdrawing with the resource-based industries they are in. Northerners are starting to feel that they will start to rebuild the economy themselves. In this transition, we are going to create some of our own jobs. In this transition, we are starting to have confidence in ourselves that we can run our own economy. What we are going to do as a government—we are starting to do it and this has been laid out in the budget—is to put some of the tools in place for northerners to grab on to, to rebuild that economy.

That is what the throne speech was about and that is what the budget was about. I would call some of these members I hear talking bad news bears. We have a lot of bears in the north but some bad news bears from the north have come down here. All they are doing is glooming-and-dooming. In the last two years, as the member representing Timiskaming, I have tried to act basically as a promoter for our area of the north and as a cheerleader saying, "Listen, we can do it ourselves."

It is a challenge. There are problems. I look at them as being challenges and opportunities rather than just excuses for nay-saying and glooming-and-dooming. It is time we, as northerners, start to take up those tools that are in place and that the government is providing. We should look at our greatest resource, which is us, the people of the north, and stop putting ourselves and the region north of North Bay down. It is the most beautiful part of this country, let alone of this province. As a northerner, I am proud to live there. I am going work with northerners to help rebuild our economy.

I would like to go into some of the specifics the Treasurer mentioned. What we have tried to do through the throne speech and in the budget is to look at the very basic infrastructure problems we have in the north and to try to get them improved and ironed out so that we use those improvements, such as in transportation and the heritage fund, as economic development tools to rebuild that economy.

The transportation component is one of the most important aspects of the budget. Our penalty of geography, being so far from the markets, has cost us in the development of this province. We feel that we can start to overcome these by providing good transportation services to and from the north and within the north itself.

Some of the opposition members say: "You threw in only another \$26 million. You increased the northern transportation budget by only a

third." That is somehow peanuts. "We need \$100 million there." I would like to tell the members that \$100 million cannot be spent on transportation in one year. What we have not done is what the fellows across the way would do. That is why they are over there and why they are going to be staying there for the next few years. They used to create a budget that would say, "We will spend \$100 million on roads," or "We will put \$80 million into this farm program next year." When it came down to the end of the fiscal year, it would be shown to us that, "Gee, yes, we budgeted \$80 million in that farm program"—or this or that—"but golly, we were able to spend only \$20 million. Isn't that too bad? We did budget for that because we thought the need was there."

It is a tremendous trick of inflating a budget. What we are saying is that we are here for the long term and we are putting out a responsible budget and we are putting in the money we can spend. Sure, we can put it up and blow it all up and say we are going to spend \$100 million on northern roads, and eventually we are going to, but we cannot spend that this year.

Basically, the pipe is full. The engineering and the planning have been done and are being carried out. If we were to place that money there, even if we had the engineering plans in place, we could not carry out the work because there are not the contractors in place to carry it out.

One of the things we want to do, as this government is helping to build the north, is to have the people of the north do the work and the companies of the north carry out the contracts. We want the money that goes to the north to stay in the north, and it is going to take a while for that to happen.

Tomorrow in North Bay I am going to be announcing the specific projects in relation to the transportation budget. The people in the north are going to be extremely pleased by most aspects of that announcement because we are starting to target the very basic roads and highways and municipal projects that northerners have been asking this government to carry out. We will be addressing that tomorrow.

Another criticism we get is about gas tax, and I admit it is a nuisance and it is a problem. I do not like paying higher gas tax than southern Ontario. Part of the problem is that we as northerners, when we drive down to southern Ontario, pass through gasoline alley south of Gravenhurst and see the very cheapest prices in Ontario.

If you travel around the province and fill up in west Toronto or farther on down the line, you

will find that at many times you will fill up at the same price as you will, as of yesterday, in Sudbury, for instance, or in other northern towns and cities where the big discrepancy is not between north and south but between the cities and towns of the north itself.

This is a problem. Our sister government of Quebec has tried to address that problem. It has tried to address it in a way that many members of this House are proponents of: that somehow we decrease the excise tax for northern Ontario as was done in northern Quebec to see if that would solve the problem. I would love that to happen. I would love to see that happen and to see it become a reality at the pump, but the reality is that it does not happen. Quebec has tried that. We have seen reports now, after a lengthy study the government has done after doing the very thing proponents in this House have asked for. It does not work because the oil companies and, unfortunately, the retailers pocket the rebate.

I have sympathy for why the retailers do that. The reason those margins are much higher in many of those small towns and cities of the north is that the margin they have to play with has to be large because of the very low volumes of gasoline they are selling.

It is very easy in Metro Toronto and other very busy places in southern Ontario to work on a margin of 2.8 cents per litre, which is the minimum-type margin that most gas stations work on. When you have the volume flows, you can do that.

However, when you are up in places such as Longlac and Sioux Lookout and many of the towns in northwestern Ontario, it is not so much the transportation component that adds on to the extra expense of northern gasoline; it is that they do not have the volume of traffic.

If we were to go ahead and lower the excise tax for northern Ontario, we would see it all the next day at the pump, but over the next few weeks and the next few months, what we would see is the gradual increase back to the prices we had, the day before we lowered those taxes.

That would be unfortunate because what we would see then is that the Treasurer, who needs that income to spend on northern road construction—the very things northerners want—would have less money to do that and northerners would be paying the very same high prices for gasoline again, so we would not be solving anything at all.

We have just completed an exercise, and we did this before the budget, of consulting with our northern development councils. These councils

were set up by my colleague the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), who is the chairman of these councils. I would like to say and put on the record that these councils are working marvellously.

What we are getting from these councils, which are made up of a cross-section of northerners, is advice to the government. We put the question to them: "We know it is a problem with high gas prices in northern Ontario; what would you like to see? How would you like to see these problems solved?" Northerners said to us through the NDCs—except for one; eight of them out of the nine—"We would like to see extra moneys being put towards northern road construction."

That is the very thing the Treasurer did. The Treasurer is listening to northerners and has responded through the budget to northerners. As a northerner, I agree with the NDCs, and it is ironic that the one NDC that said, "No, we want it both ways: lower taxes and increased roads," happened to be the one from Timiskaming. I am in agreement with the majority of the NDCs and think that we have to work at the road transportation problem first.

1720

We will continue considering the problem of gas prices in the north because it is going to be a problem and it certainly is a challenge. We have watched our sister province deal with it and fail, unfortunately. I was hoping that its solution might have worked and that I could come to the Treasurer and say, "Quebec has tried this and it does work." Unfortunately, it does not. The Treasurer was right and the people in Treasury were right that it cannot be done that way, but we are continuing to work with these problems.

I would like to continue about transportation and say how important it is. As I said, because of our penalty of geography, we do not have the closeness, because of speed and time, to some of the manufacturing plants in southern Ontario. Plants in southwestern Ontario might be of a similar distance but, because of better four-lane highways, they have better and quicker access to factories.

Let us take a look at the car manufacturing assembly business that we have in southern Ontario which is a great part of the economy of this province. Because the Highway 401 corridor was there, basically the car parts manufacturing runs along that 401 corridor from Windsor through Oakville to Oshawa. Now that we have plants in Alliston and other places, cities like North Bay, for instance, are just as close to

Alliston as some of the cities further down the southwest Ontario corridor towards Windsor, but the reason we do not have companies locating in North Bay, for instance, is that we do not have four-lane highways running up to North Bay.

What we are looking at today, with the car industry in particular, in the new leaner and meaner times that have come upon us as a result of the recession of the early 1980s, is basically the principle of just-in-time inventory. Now we are seeing all the car parts manufacturers clustered around the assembly plant areas. If they are not clustered, some people in the north have solved this problem by having a warehouse that is mobile.

If you have a factory in northern Ontario and you want to service Detroit, Alliston, Windsor, Oakville or Oshawa, you have a transport parked outside the gate of the assembly plant so that when the parts are required, they can be delivered immediately. You also have one on the road so that there is a moving warehouse on the way to the plant and you have one leaving your operation in the north so that you can satisfy the just-in-time inventory concept.

In order to help northern entrepreneurs get into this market, we have to provide the infrastructure; that is, the roads. We are working on that and we will be announcing that sort of planning very shortly.

The heritage fund was another tool that the Treasurer has now placed in the hands of northerners. Right away, the opposition jumped upon it and said, "It should be \$1 billion, not \$30 million." We said we thought we could spend \$30 million this year. That is the initial allocation. Maybe we cannot spend it this year, I do not know, but we are not going to rush in and spend it madly.

I would rather see it retained as a fund that we do not have to gobble up and that we can carry over. We are working towards that if we do not spend it all. It should be a fund that has been established in lieu of the resources that have been extracted from the north. Basically, it is a people's fund and we are going to be setting it up in consultation with the people of northern Ontario. It is going to be northerners who decide how we spend those moneys, how we administer those moneys and give us advice on how much money needs to be put into that fund.

This is the first time I can remember in my lifetime that a government in Ontario has actually worked with northerners and asked them to come up with the guidelines, asked them for their solutions, their answers to the problems here,

instead of imposing some sort of made-in-Toronto solution or Queen's Park solution to the north. We have decided that if we are to come up with permanent, long-term solutions, we have to involve northerners. It is northerners who are going to come up with those answers.

There is another thing I would like to comment on that is a very important industry in my riding, and that is agriculture. This budget the Treasurer brought out addresses in a very serious way the problems that are facing us in agriculture.

As a farmer before I came to the House, I have always been very concerned about agriculture. It certainly saddens me to see the acres and acres of abandoned farms around the farming communities in northern Ontario. Timiskaming is probably one of the most intensively farmed areas of northern Ontario. It saddens me to see that the tremendous expansion, the clearing and the draining of land that occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s, has really come to naught now and we are seeing some of that land abandoned.

It is because of my not wanting to see for a third time in Timiskaming and in other places in the north the regrowing of that cleared land into bush that I started an exercise, in conjunction with the member for Cochrane North as co-chairman of the northern development councils, to travel the north, as I did in April, to go to all the agricultural areas. We had nine regional meetings in the north to talk to the farmers and to ask them what they thought we could be doing in the north to help them earn a living on the rural land base.

The farmers were absolutely amazed that people from government were actually coming to them to ask their opinion of what we, as a government and as a province, should be doing to further enhance the life of northern, rural Ontarians. They were absolutely amazed we would actually come to them and that we would listen. What they were used to was usually a minister flying into an area, dropping off a cheque, basically saying "adios" and exiting as fast, within an afternoon; that was their impression of what government was all about.

That is not our impression over here of what government is all about. When ministers and other members visit the north, they stay and carry out the business that brought them there. But then they stay, they talk and they listen to northerners. They all bring that information back to their ministries and to the Premier. The Premier is getting very well informed, from all the ministers and all the members who travel to northern Ontario, on what is going on there.

So it was with the NDC agricultural task force that we carried out throughout the north. As I said, northerners were amazed. We found that northerners had ideas they gave, that they thought we could help them initiate. We discovered there was not any one magical solution, any one super idea, some medicinal super pill that would fix all the ills of our economy in the north, but what they came up with was that there were many small initiatives that could help the farming community and the rural community of northern Ontario diversify.

We thought, and they told us, we could identify new markets, new products, new sidelines that the rural land base of northern Ontario could produce. In many cases, there were very, very small ideas. For instance, around the Thunder Bay area where you have a large urban centre, there were many opportunities to look at the pick-your-own strawberry market, the whole pick-your-own market. Urban people today want to get an attachment to the land. They actually would like to get involved with food production, even if it is only at the harvesting end. There is a tremendous opportunity in the Thunder Bay area, Paipoonge township and all those areas there.

We are finding that those opportunities are now being seized upon by our farmers in the north. It is not one big answer, that somehow somebody might be able to make a full living on a pick-your-own strawberry operation, but it may be that farmers who are up there can put two, three, four, five acres towards strawberries, or any of the European small fruits, such as the currants and gooseberries that all of a sudden seem to be coming into high demand, and produce a high-value crop as a sideline to help them get through this tough time the agricultural community is facing.

We found many answers like that, whether it be aquaculture or agrforestry. There tended to be many solutions northerners were putting forth, basically challenging us as a government to help them and come up with programs so they would be able to see their initiatives come to fruition.

We are a government that listens and works with northerners and we are going to continue to be so. That is why this government will be back after the next election, whenever that is, because we listen to the people of Ontario.

1730

I would also like to address what I think is very important in this budget and a very important principle of what the Treasurer had set out to do for all Ontarians. I think that principle is that

people who are earning a subsistence living should not be paying Ontario income tax.

What the Treasurer said is that people who are struggling, who are working to make a living in this province, should be able to retain as much of that money in their own pockets as they need to take care of themselves. That is why the Treasurer basically took \$246 million out of his Treasury and said that will remain in the pockets of Ontarians, and he has done that in three basic areas that I think are very important.

He did that, as I said, by cutting 160,000 people off the tax rolls. That is a continuation of his first initiative in the budget of last year. He also did it by basically raising the income levels that allow people to qualify for Ontario health insurance plan premium assistance. The people of Ontario understand the OHIP premium and they understand it as an insurance policy, but some people find it very difficult to pay the full premium. The Treasurer has taken many people off the OHIP premium rolls, and I thank him for that. I know the people of Ontario thank him for that.

There is something else the Treasurer did that I think seems, at first glance, maybe not that important. It is, as I experienced last night in buying my supper on the way home and as many people have since June 1, the elimination of the seven per cent sales tax on basic meal items under \$4. I think it is a very important principle that we should not be taxing a very basic, simple meal, that people should be able to go out and buy a meal that is under \$4 and not have to pay sales tax on it.

It is quite a shock when you come to a fast food place now and you buy a hamburger, you buy a pop and you know it is not going to be the cost of what is posted above you across from the counter, but it actually is today for the first time. It is quite amazing and it is going to be an adjustment for all of us, but an adjustment I know the Treasurer of this province is going to get full credit for.

Another industry I would like to talk about in dealing with northern Ontario, and that is the industry of tourism, because tourism is going to be basically one of the industries of the future for not only northern Ontario but also the province as a whole.

The Treasurer has approved \$2.8 million extra in the Destinations North program, for a total of \$6 million. In my riding, I have been communicating with as many tourist operators as I can about Destinations North, because what this program does is offer money to tourist operators

for capital expansion to make those improvements and to expand in order to capture the ever-increasing tourism market that is coming through northern Ontario.

Not only that, Destinations North also offers operating capital which is quite unique for any type of business, because it is basically a cash-heavy business where there are tremendous cash flows needed in order to build up food stocks and inventories of other supplies to service the tourist industry. Destinations North appreciates that. It has that component built into its program.

Also, with our TRIP loans through the Northern Ontario Development Corp., there has been more funding there, and that is something else I am telling our tourist operators they should be looking at. If they want to expand or get into the tourism business, this is an opportunity they should be looking at, and there are many programs from the Ontario government that are going to help them with this expansion.

There is one other industry I would like to talk about that is very important to northern Ontario, and that is mining.

At this time in northern Ontario, and it has a particular effect on my riding, gold mining is on a tremendous boom. I am glad to see that boom come back, because many of the northern towns have been riding on the downside of the boom-and-bust cycle of northern Ontario for far, far too long. We are seeing that boom-and-bust cycle now start to swing on the upside. We are getting out of the trough in our gold mining areas, because the gold is there. I would argue with some people that it is not a finite resource because there is enough gold in northern Ontario to keep that economy going for a millennium. It is just there and it has to be found.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines has put programs in place that allow and help people to find that resource. There are many programs in place that are allowing us not only to find it but also, once it has been found, to access that resource and to help the mines develop. One thing the Treasurer did, as he saw that the mining industry was developing, is that he said, "We are now going to put a forgivable clause in the mining profits tax to the mining industry for the next three years."

At first look, people think that is maybe just new mines, but that is all new workings. That has a very important component to it that I would like to talk about, because it also ties in with our love of the environment and the need to clean up the sins of our grandfathers in the mining industry.

Because of inefficient milling methods in the old days, we are finding now that there are tremendous resources out there in our tailing ponds. The tailing ponds from the old gold mines are a tremendous resource for northern Ontario. Through modern milling methods, we will be able to clean up those areas and, not only that but create wealth again in northern Ontario.

This basic three-year exemption from the mining profits tax not only includes new workings from new discoveries but also includes reworkings of tailing mines and the reopening of old mines. As one of the mining executives said, this is possibly going to be the kicker that will just swing that idea and that decision from mining companies to make a go decision on having an operating mine. We are going to make sure that kicker is in place and we are going to see, because of that and thanks to the Treasurer, many more mines and new workings established in the next few years.

I would like to give other members of the House a chance to laud the Treasurer's budget, I hope, because it is a laudable document. I am sure the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) would agree, as the member for Kingston and the Islands (Mr. Keyes) has noted, that it is a laudable document. I relish the words from the member for Brantford.

The point I want to make is that it is not gloom and doom in northern Ontario. There are problems up there and there are challenges and opportunities, but I am sick and tired of hearing a steady stream of gloom and doom, because it is self-destructive. The members come up day after day and, basically, they talk down the place and they talk down the people.

How are we to rebuild the economy that way? That is not the way to do it. There is a lot of opportunity there and through positive action, we are going to rebuild the economy in northern Ontario. We are going to have a place for our children and our grandchildren to live and work, because when it comes to the bottom line, that is what it is all about.

Mr. Pouliot: I had no intention to speak, but sometimes, not in the face of provocation but of comments, with respect, sir, that border on the misleading. In some of our communities in northwestern Ontario, we have an 80 per cent or 85 per cent rate of unemployment. If it invites controversy or anger, if it brings out the worst in people at times, we must always keep that in mind. The member for Timiskaming (Mr. Harris) was one of the first to complain some years ago. How things change.

Maybe under the umbrella of expediency and opportunism, you can commit some terrible sins, but you must never forget that the people of the north have not been the recipients of the recovery that started to take place around 1981 or 1982. We are most appreciative of the efforts being made. We do not adhere to the philosophy that if everything else fails up north, then you blame the south.

What we are seeing, and we are justified, is that we need a concerted and constant effort. We need a timetable and, at times, we need to make noise, so we do not get bypassed. We are less than 10 per cent of the population. At times, we are lost in 90 per cent of the land mass. If we appear from time to time to be making noise, I think our position is very justified, and the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay) should really keep that in mind. He gets sick and tired. We get sick and tired as well, and our grievances are most legitimate.

Having said this, we will look forward to more measures, but we do not want any patchwork. What we wish to have is a specific timetable established, so we can at last benefit from the recovery the people down south have been able to appreciate over the past five years.

1740

Mr. Ramsay: I am sorry that my friend and colleague the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) was not here for all of my speech. I said that what we need to do as northerners is to rebuild our economy and that the government, with certain tools the Treasurer has given us through the budget, is putting those aids in place to help us.

We talk about the heritage fund. Let us use that fund for the community adjustment the member is talking about where we have those tremendous problems, where there is a town where basically a single industry collapsed. That is what it is for. It is there now. Why does he not work with me and we will start to work on and address those problems. When we have a tremendous community adjustment problem, as we do, we are going to have to come up with a solution as a community, not a made-in-Toronto solution, saying, "This is the answer for this town now. We are going to make it into a lumber mill instead of a steel town." We are going to have to do it from the ground up and it is going to have to be northerners who decide what they want to do with a town when the economy collapses. We have many options. Northerners want to hold on to that town because it is no longer a mining

camp; it is a town and they have a sense of place and community.

I am sympathetic to that and that is what the fund is there for. The member knows that and I know that. Let us work together and make it an adjustment fund. Let us start to work on that, but we cannot decide here in Toronto and say, "That community should produce this and here is a bundle of money to do it." It has to be a viable enterprise. The government is not going to be able to do it. It is the people of the north who are going to do it.

I am saying that some of those tools are in place now. Let us keep working at it and not just accept it. We need more of those things. He is going to fight for it and I am going to fight for it too. Let us work together and get some of these problems solved.

Mr. Jackson: As the representative from Burlington South, I wish to respond to the government's May 19 budget statement. I joined with all members of this House on the point of our anticipation, in spite of all the hype that was associated leading up to this long-awaited budget, and I also shared the hope that many of the needs of many of the constituents of Burlington would be met by this government's statement. It is actually its third budget statement.

The Liberal government, in fact the Treasurer, spoke of his commitment to the principle that all people in Ontario should be able to live independent lives for as long as possible. They are willing to provide community support services and expand opportunities for independent living for our seniors and the physically disabled, the developmentally handicapped and the discharged psychiatric patients.

In my office in Burlington South, I receive on a daily basis calls from people who are trying to lead those very lives the Treasurer described. Even with the services that exist now, they are frustrated daily in their attempts to live independently. There are reasons for this frustration in spite of recent Ministry of Health announcements. There was an announcement that the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) tried to convey came out of the budget announcement, but in fact it was established a year previously. He made an announcement about increasing chronic care and acute care beds for Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. In that announcement of only a week ago, the minister has not recognized the immediate need for more chronic beds in hospitals and the need to expand beds immediately in nursing homes in Halton region. The announcement he

made will not net additional new beds in that region for five years. Where is the commitment in this budget?

Burlington has a senior citizen's population of approximately 12,000 people. These are people in the age bracket from 65 to over the century mark. They are very active. They are the young at heart, the quiet reserved senior going through his golden years in his own way, those who are growing older with the infirmities of ageing and a comparatively new group in the category labelled frail elderly. The gathering crisis for the ageing society is having adequate facilities to meet the demands and the financial support from three levels of government to develop systems and facilities that will allow seniors to enjoy a third of their lifetime with comfort, financial security, dignity and a place in their community.

I looked at the budget carefully to determine where those initiatives would be followed through. I am saddened to say we are unable to find specific cases and specific dollar commitments that would assure the people of Burlington those commitments would be met.

We have an immediate need for acute care beds, for chronic care beds, for affordable retirement home facilities, for living accommodations according to income and for funding to expand every health service utilized by the seniors community.

The time has past for addressing this problem with grand statements in the budget or in the throne speech or with announcements for programs that will possibly be in place five years from now or even by the end of the century, as some of the announcements are referring to.

There is need for greater sensitivity for the problems among those who have the power to implement the necessary programs without delay. There is a need to commit the necessary dollars for an immediate response.

Generally, our community-based hospitals are designed to provide care to acutely ill or injured individuals. However, they are now being asked to care for chronically ill patients as well. The age of patients is getting higher; for some patients, their length of stay is being extended.

I am concerned that at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital the waiting list is now almost four years for the chronic care beds that the minister announced some weeks ago. I am concerned that this local hospital has proposed on at least two occasions to the minister, a resolution to that problem of providing immediate relief for that waiting list. That is not to say we do not appreciate the \$20 million but, as I have stated,

we are concerned that commitment of dollars will not net proper beds for at least another four and probably five years.

This has raised concern about a particular group of patients who are waiting at the Joseph Brant hospital for transfer to nursing homes or some other institution. The fact that they are on waiting lists is acknowledged, and they are inappropriate within the hospital. They are called bed blockers.

I find it difficult to understand that we will not accept waiting lists for our maternity wards or students entering our public school system but we do accept such lists for senior citizens in Burlington and across Ontario.

While awaiting a placement, patients live in an environment that is socially restrictive and poorly designed for their needs. The daily functioning of these patients inevitably declines, and one is left to wonder how much better these individuals would be if their most appropriate home could be available at the time it is first needed.

Closely related to this concern is the fact that on occasion, elderly confused but ambulatory patients are cared for in psychiatric wards. This is the case at Joseph Brant hospital.

Although done to protect the patient from the risks of wandering, it exposes the patient to other risks, such as the young psychotic patient. Alzheimer's disease and most other dementia are neurological disorders, and we question the appropriateness of care in a psychiatric unit. Nowhere in the budget do we see a reference to resolving that question or that problem in an immediate sort of way.

What do I tell the constituent who phones in to our office and wants to know why the government is not acting now to see that facilities are able to take her husband? She does not want to see him placed on a waiting list for three and a half years. How do I handle her fears for her husband's safety as the only appropriate placement for him at this time is in the psychiatric ward at Joseph Brant hospital?

She wants him to live an independent life but is hampered by the real stress she lives under daily in her attempt to fight for the best care for her husband who, because he is a victim of Alzheimer's disease, cannot fight for his own rights.

The health care workers we speak to in this province are dedicated, caring individuals who are also frustrated in their attempts to deal with a rising ageing population without adequate accommodation for them.

We must be looking for real ways to strengthen the support that is given to the care givers in this province. If we do not, we stand to have even more people who require medical assistance for the problems brought by their caring for their spouses or family members.

1750

The region of Halton has projected that in 1987 we will have a population of more than 25,000 people over the age of 65. Of those, it is projected that four per cent over 65 will have some form of dementia that would range from mild to severe, but for the 1,000 who will be directly affected by Alzheimer's itself, four times that figure are also affected, those being the spouses and families.

I want to talk about the government's recent announcement to spend more than \$1 million on an advertising campaign to convey a new image about seniors in Ontario. It is included in the budget, of course. Many constituents of mine have called and taken exception to the fact that in their opinion that is an inappropriate use of dollars if they are earmarked for the seniors in Ontario. They are hopeful that this government will reconsider that program and that use of dollars to pay an advertising agency when there are programs and needs, as I have just stated, that go unattended for the most part in the current budget.

I want to talk a bit about homes for the aged. I believe the budget makes reference to an extra \$100 million that would be spent over six years. My understanding is that the government plans to spend less than \$10 million in this year. Reference has been made to programs that would be funded, yet the government has not announced whether this means refurbishing or recreational programming costs.

There is a home for the aged run by the region of Halton. It is called Halton Centennial Manor. It has 50 residents and it has an additional 245 residents with an in-care situation. That manor is badly in need of upgrading and refurbishing. It has been a major topic of discussion within the Halton region. The architect who has been commissioned by the region says they need \$26 million to bring this facility into an appropriate state. They wish to refurbish Martin House, to rebuild part of the main manor and to build some geared-to-income housing units.

It raises the question of how this government expects to address the needs for an entire province when this year's allocation will not even begin to address the needs of one manor in Halton alone. The health and fire regulation work alone on this site will cost \$2 million and that

manor has been given official notice that they must be completed by February 1988. For the government to stand there and state that it will be able to address those needs is unfair to the seniors who are living at Halton Centennial Manor and to the regional councillors and the district health council that has expressed concern about conditions there.

I want to talk about nursing homes for a moment. I was very disappointed the budget did not address many of the concerns being expressed by nursing home residents and nursing home operators across Ontario. Nowhere is there a clear statement in the budget that the government is prepared to deal with the fact that the current daily rate for operators is \$49.16 per resident. That fee has been in place for almost two years now. The government has been obligated to deal fairly and openly with the nursing home operators since January 1, 1987, and yet no agreement has been reached.

Nowhere in the budget do we have a clear statement about the dollars that will be committed, not only on that base rate but also on some of the enrichments that have been requested as a result of the government's Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act. I worked on that bill for several months. The members of the House will recall this involves the patients' or residents' bill of rights, and it was my pleasure on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party not only to support the residents' bill of rights, but also to table a motion that says the government should commit the necessary funds to ensure that the assessed needs of a resident in a nursing home in Ontario are being met.

I was disappointed the government paid only lip service to the needs of Ontario residents with a statement on their rights, even when the member for York East (Ms. Hart), parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, suggested the bill of rights was merely "a symbolic tool for residents' educational purposes."

If this government had been listening to the residents of nursing homes in Ontario and if they had been listening to the operators, it would know there have been requests outstanding for improvements and they cost money. The government has indicated it will fund 60 additional nursing home beds for the community of Burlington, but then indicates it will do that only if a nonprofit nursing home makes application.

All the nursing homes in the community of Burlington are having difficulty under the current financial arrangements the government has made. For this government to suggest it is addressing the problem by setting out dollars in the budget to expand nursing home services, without addressing the issue of the funding, is only playing optics, playing games with the real issue of providing nursing home beds in our region.

I call upon the government to be forthcoming in this budget, which is silent on the increase in that fee. There are insufficient beds in Burlington, as I have indicated. Currently, the total number is 272 for a population of over 120,000. I predict we will not have an application for those 60 nursing home beds announced by this government for at least the balance of this year, which means that even if someone were willing to construct the units they would not be ready for our citizens for at least three years. Are there no short-term solutions and funds committed in this budget?

I would like to speak briefly about the Ontario tax grant for the seniors in my riding. The government announced this as major step forward. It has increased the Ontario tax grant from \$500 to \$600, but will this insulate Burlington seniors, particularly home owners, from huge municipal tax increases over the next two years, increases due to the potential move to market value assessment as well as to make up the shortfall between the province's funding and increases anticipated by the tax portion charged by the public and separate school boards.

What about the seniors in rental situations under Bill 51 which passes through additional expenses previously not absorbed by tenants under old legislation? This \$100 increase, although it will put an extra \$100 in their pockets, will be immediately removed by the actions of this government, will be removed by a Treasurer who gave it with the one hand but who will take it back again with the other by providing shortfalls in the municipal tax base.

Mr. Speaker, I notice it is six o'clock. I have not completed debate.

The Deputy Speaker: You will move adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr. Jackson, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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 Grandmaître, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, R. (Erie L)
 Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, C. E. (York East L)
 Hennessy, M. (Fort William PC)
 Jackson, C. (Burlington South PC)
 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
 Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
 Mancini, R. (Essex South L)
 Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
 Miller, G. I. (Haldimand-Norfolk L)
 Mitchell, R. C. (Carleton PC)
 Newman, B. (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
 O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)
 Poirier, J. (Prescott-Russell L)

Pollock, J. (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)
Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Ramsay, D. (Timiskaming L)
Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)
Runciman, R. W. (Leeds PC)
Sheppard, H. N. (Northumberland PC)
Smith, E. J. (London South L)
Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development
(York North L)
Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Turner, J. M. (Peterborough PC)
Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)
Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)
Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)





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Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Thursday, June 4, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, June 4, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

COMPUTERIZED TOURIST RESERVATION SYSTEM

Mr. Guindon moved resolution 14:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation should move immediately to implement a computerized tourist reservation system for eastern Ontario similar to the system currently in use in the province of Nova Scotia.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of that for his windup.

Mr. Guindon: It is with great pleasure that I address this assembly on a matter that is of great importance to me: tourism in eastern Ontario. I feel that we, as legislators, must pursue every available avenue in an effort to enhance tourism not only in the east but also all across Ontario. That is why I am requesting that this government implement a central computerized reservation system similar to that currently in use in several of the maritime provinces.

This government, as well as previous governments, has always put a strong emphasis on tourism. It has taken several forms and different names. We have asked people to "discover" Ontario and now we are telling them how "incredible" we are. The current government has even gone as far as creating a waterfall to promote the beauty of Ontario.

The one point I am trying to make through all this is that you can show as many picturesque scenes as you want, manufactured or natural, but if people do not know what accommodation is available or where to find the information, you will not see an increase in the number of visitors to your area, pure and simple.

I am proposing a form of one-stop shopping. The system could be run by the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation but I would rather see it contracted out to a private firm. There are several systems in existence but the one that could be used as a model is that currently in operation in

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and parts of Maine. Let me describe exactly what I have in mind. The system is relatively inexpensive to operate. In the off-season, it would be run effectively with about 15 or 16 people. During the busy season, staffing requirements could reach a combined 40 full-time and seasonal workers. The entire business would be located in one suite of offices in eastern Ontario and staffed by people knowledgeable about tourism in the area.

How this service would work is quite simple. A person could call a toll-free number and the consultant at the other end would be able to reserve any type of accommodation, travel and excursion the client wished. A series of 1-800 numbers could be established to serve all areas of Canada and the United States. There would be no cost to the general public for using the service. Listed or member operators could be charged a small percentage of their realized reservations to help pay for the system. This would make it fair to all members of the service. By paying a percentage rather than a flat rate, the operator is paying for the service only when it brings him business.

No special equipment is required by the resort owners. Large hotels would be advised immediately of reservations through their telex system. If a telex is not used by the resort, that resort would be advised by telephone within minutes of the reservations being made. The type of tourist operators who could join the service is not limited to large hotel chains. Anyone, including campgrounds, bed-and-breakfasts, lodges and small country inns, is able to use the service.

It is common that if the more well known resorts are full, people generally do not try to locate other accommodations such as bed-and-breakfasts. It is not because they do not want to stay in these places; it is because they do not even know they exist.

The use of such a system has proved to increase the number of people using the smaller inns as well as lengthening the average stay per person. Let us face it, there are several of these small country inns around this province that do not have the resources to advertise. Since this type of low-cost service is available, we should

do what we can to help all tourist operators in Ontario increase their business.

If such a program were implemented in eastern Ontario, it would not only help the tourism industry but would also be of great assistance to the touring public. With one telephone call from your home or office, whether you are in New York or Vancouver, you could book your air ticket, get a rental car, reserve a two-week stay at any of a number of excellent resorts, and plan several day trips to places such as Upper Canada Village, the Thousand Islands, Old Fort Henry, World Fest in Cornwall and the Rideau lakes, and even excursions of fishing and hunting. You could even call up that number and it would give you the bank rates and the exchange rates as they are on that day.

It would also make it easier when organizing a convention. Those people attending the convention would have to call only one number to arrange their transportation and book a room. The system would automatically keep an up-to-date inventory of all rooms put aside for convention use. It would also make it easier for people visiting the area who are not involved with the convention. They would be able to find accommodation without making several frustrating calls.

1010

The success of this type of approach to tourism speaks for itself. In Nova Scotia, there were only 10 operators participating in this service when it first started in 1978. Now, close to 99 per cent of all guest accommodation in the province is listed with the system. It is also in use throughout the Maritimes and in the state of Maine.

Municipalities, such as the National Capital Commission in Ottawa and the city of Vancouver, are currently giving active consideration to this type of program. I feel that for the system to be successful as well as to justify the implementation cost, a larger tourist area, such as all of eastern Ontario, should be used for at least the initial period.

The operating cost involved in serving the national capital region and the cost for all of eastern Ontario would be virtually the same. Covering all of eastern Ontario would also allow for a better evaluation of the service in that a more diverse tourist area would be covered. In this way, when the system proves to be a success, we would be in a better position to implement the system throughout Ontario.

Obviously, I am not advocating the use of one system or one firm over another. I would expect the government to examine and evaluate which

program would be best suited to all aspects of tourism in Ontario. When you speak with people from outside eastern Ontario and mention various places, they have either never heard of them or else they may have stopped for gasoline while on their way to Montreal or Toronto.

We in the east, like those in other areas of Ontario, have much to offer. Our history goes back long before Confederation. There are excellent campgrounds, historical sites, terrific night-spots, fine restaurants and many interesting little out-of-the-way places for people to discover. More and more people are looking for a quiet place to spend a weekend or even a week. As big-city life continues to increase their blood pressure, the more they long for the solitude of a quiet country inn.

In eastern Ontario, we have all of this. What I am asking in this resolution is that the government implement a system that has been proved to increase tourism in a given area while giving the greatest flexibility to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I will reserve some of the time left for later.

The Deputy Speaker: Fine, thank you; 11 minutes and 22 seconds are reserved.

Mr. Warner: I would like to congratulate the member for Cornwall (Mr. Guindon) for bringing forward this resolution. Those of us who have had the privilege of visiting parts of eastern Ontario know that it is a beautiful area of our province and an area that has quite a number of scenic spots. As the member has indicated, it is quite an excellent area for a vacation, whether it is for a couple of days or longer.

I think the member has hit on a good idea. It is important for us to reflect on the fact that tourism today is certainly a growing area of our economy in Ontario, as it is in many parts of our country. People generally, especially middle-income people, have more money at their disposal for vacations. There has been an attempt, I would say over the last 30 or 40 years, to ensure that people have more leisure time, more holiday time, long weekends and so on, so that they have an opportunity to travel.

In Ontario, we have been attempting to improve the quality of the services provided to tourists. If members think back a little while, the variety of vacation opportunities and the variety of accommodation have increased. We have everything in Ontario from cottages and inns to hotels and motels. There are farm vacations, bed-and-breakfast opportunities, guest homes and so on. There is quite a range of accommodation available.

There is also a greater variety of things to see and do in Ontario. Much of that is being developed and continues to be developed, whether it is historic sites or forts such as Old Fort Henry, whether it is various parks such as small community parks and the large provincial parks, or whether it is the growth of the artisan type of operation where pottery and arts and crafts and so on are available.

Many communities are attempting to promote their local artists or local historic sites, to find something that makes them unique. In fact, if we want to talk about each little community attempting to put itself forward as a place for tourists to come to, I heard on the radio yesterday that the little town of Exeter has decided, as some white squirrels have been discovered, to adopt the white squirrel as the town mascot. Apparently, Exeter has a population of about 600 white squirrels. This has brought about a flourishing little cottage industry in producing ceramic white squirrels for sale. No doubt the tourists who go to Exeter will find they may wish to purchase a ceramic white squirrel as a little memento of their visit to the town of Exeter.

There is no end to the imagination and creativity of the good people of Ontario. Certainly in eastern Ontario, which is what the member is speaking about, the little towns and villages have an opportunity to develop their own tourist attractions.

How do we respond to this? We know there are more people with money to spend and a little more leisure time. We would like them, both the people who live in Ontario and those who live outside Ontario, to see all our province. We have an obligation to try to provide the very best in the way of information and service to the public.

One way to do that is to utilize computers. Naturally, it makes sense that we utilize the capacity of the computer system so tourists who are planning a visit, or while they are actually here in Ontario, can very quickly find out what accommodation is available, what places there are to see, things to do and places to eat. The more quickly and the better we can provide that information to tourists, the more likely they are to come and enjoy their stay in Ontario.

Because the member comes from eastern Ontario, he has of course directed his approach to eastern Ontario, but I think he will agree that the approach he is suggesting could be available throughout the entire province so each region of this province would have an opportunity to provide in a very systematic way the kind of detailed information helpful to tourists.

By so doing, we are strengthening our economy. We are making it possible to obtain those tourist dollars from folks outside the province, as well as from those within, and this has increased tax revenue. That always catches the attention of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). He likes to see a few extra dollars enter the very large Treasury on any occasion. I think it creates a little better quality of life for our residents as well. The people of Ontario have an opportunity not only to see the province but also to enjoy their short stay or their long stay.

I am pleased to support the resolution and I wish to commend the member on his effort. I hope that through his effort, the province, through the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, will indeed take the resolution seriously and make it a reality.

1020

Mr. South: I rise in support of the resolution of the member for Cornwall. We think anything that will assist tourism in this province has to be a big plus. We in eastern Ontario, especially in the Kingston area, feel that the surface of tourism has barely been scratched. We have in our area the beautiful and majestic St. Lawrence River, the river on which the earliest explorers came to this country, and later the voyageurs, soldiers and settlers. Now much of the commerce of North America travels on this mighty river.

In the eastern part of Ontario, we have not only the St. Lawrence River but also the beautiful Thousand Islands. There they sit in the St. Lawrence River like a beautiful jewelled necklace. Some of these islands are the size of postage stamps, and some, like Wolfe and Howe islands, support very viable farming operations.

Tourism is our fastest-growing industry and the recent restocking of game fish in eastern Lake Ontario has added great impetus to the development of a very viable sport fishing industry in eastern Ontario and in the Kingston area.

Tourism is labour-intensive and nonpolluting. It takes service people to look after your needs when you are on holiday. It is the type of labour that cannot be replaced with a robot; it is only people. It is a very labour-intensive type of industry and when any of us is on holiday, I am sure he enjoys being indulged by the service he gets from other people.

In the Kingston area, we have not only the St. Lawrence River and the beautiful Thousand Islands, but we also have the 120-mile inland waterway, the Rideau waterway all the way from Kingston to the nation's capital. In addition, we have many inland lakes and rivers and beautiful

provincial parks, such as Bon Echo Provincial Park and Mazinaw Lake, with those prehistoric stone pictographs placed there by a now departed Indian culture.

We in eastern Ontario are very pleased with anything that will improve service to the tourist industry and we think the resolution by the member for Cornwall deserves investigation. We think eastern Ontario would be a good pilot project for this. We can iron out the kinks and work out this system for the whole of the province.

I certainly support the resolution by the member for Cornwall.

Mr. Runciman: I am glad to have the opportunity to participate in the debate today in support of the resolution of the member for Cornwall. We all know of the member's particular interest in the tourism industry in eastern Ontario and his efforts over the past two years as a member of this Legislative Assembly. He has been an outstanding member, speaking out frequently on behalf of the east and more particularly in respect to the tourism industry.

Tourism, as I think all of us know, is a very important component of the economy, perhaps more so in eastern Ontario where we see increasingly a down-sizing of manufacturing. In my own riding, there have been significant layoffs at the Black and Decker firm with the movement of its power tools division to the United States. There is Electrolux with some 80-plus jobs being lost. A number of other major manufacturing facilities are down-sizing, if not completely closing, in eastern Ontario. Kingston is another area that has been impacted negatively.

Tourism is extremely important, and I think more energy and more focus have to be placed on what we can do to improve the tourism sector in eastern Ontario. The member's proposal to have the government implement a central, computerized reservation system is an excellent suggestion, one proved in other jurisdictions and one that can reap immediate economic benefits to a region of this province that the Liberal government is treating with neglect.

One just has to look at the recent budget of the Treasurer for proof of that neglect. With close to \$1 billion of additional revenues, what did they give eastern Ontario? Peanuts, crumbs, \$5 million a year for five years; and this is at a time when they are contributing \$30 million to a domed stadium in Toronto and \$130 million extra dollars for roads in—where else? Members guessed it—Metro Toronto.

In 1986, unofficial figures, excluding Ottawa, indicate that eastern Ontario had an unemployment rate of 9.8 per cent versus a provincial rate of 7.4 per cent. We need some help and we are not getting it from this government. We have, I believe, four members of the current executive council from eastern Ontario. Two are in senior portfolios: Industry, Trade and Technology and Education. But what are they doing for eastern Ontario? The answer is virtually nothing.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) gets a grant to write down sewage-system debt in Belleville while ignoring smaller eastern Ontario municipalities in much more dire straits with their water and sewage system payments.

The Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) gets a new government building for his riding, a building that violates a long-standing policy of deinstitutionalization for the mentally handicapped. At the same time, for purely political reasons, he delays a two-and-a-half-year-old government commitment to construct a secure custody facility for young offenders in eastern Ontario.

What about the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), supposedly the most powerful of eastern Ontario ministers? He gets an Eastern Ontario Development Corp. office in his riding, and the rest of the region—forget it.

Do not just take my word for it; listen to these comments from Andrew Haydon, chairman of the Ottawa-Carleton region. This is a press release of May 22, 1987:

"There are no initiatives"—in reference to the budget—"in this area by the province of Ontario. We have to initiate, fight for, and always receive second-class funding relative to Metro Toronto. Much has been promised. The Premier himself has vowed economic aid to eastern Ontario. The result of those promises is no economic initiatives, economic deprivation and higher municipal taxes. Never in the history of municipal government in Ontario have so many promised so much been so badly deceived."

That is from the chairman of the Ottawa-Carleton region.

Mr. G. I. Miller: He must be a recycled Tory.

Mr. Runciman: Okay. The member mentions the chairman's political affiliation. I am not sure what it is, but if that quote was not enough for the member, here is a quote from a prominent eastern Ontario Liberal, a gentleman by the name of Daniel Curley of Woodlawn, a vice-president of the Carleton Liberal Association. This was on Friday, May 15.

Mr. G. I. Miller: What are we debating, tourism or eastern Ontario?

Mr. Runciman: We are debating the government's neglect of eastern Ontario. That is what we are debating.

"The provincial Liberals are in real trouble—
Interjection.

Mr. Runciman: The member does not want to hear this, does he? I do not blame him.

"The provincial Liberals are in real trouble if they are so Toronto-centred, imperceptive and insensitive that they fail to recognize that roads and regions are issues of major concern around here."

Curley, while continuing to support the federal Liberals, said: "I can no longer stomach the double-dealing platitudes and outright lies served up by the provincial Liberals. Like most people, I was willing to give Mr. Peterson a chance, but after all this time, we in Ottawa have little to show for our patience."

That is the vice-president of a provincial Liberal association.

Mr. South: Crybabies, Crybabies.

Mr. Sterling: Liberal crybabies.

Mr. Runciman: Great stuff. We will get that framed and send it over to the government side.

Interjections.

1030

The Deputy Speaker: Order. It is deteriorating a bit. Perhaps we could keep the interjections out, please.

Mr. G. I. Miller: Would the member for Leeds give us something to—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk. The member for Leeds.

Mr. Runciman: It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that this Liberal government, propped up by the New Democratic Party, is failing in respect to its handling of eastern Ontario, and failing miserably. We need executive council members with the guts to stand up and fight for eastern Ontario, people like the member for Cornwall. We need a specific tourism program to promote this under-exploited market.

Mr. South: Destinations East. Have you heard of it?

Mr. Runciman: Baloney. We need innovative initiatives, such as the one the member for Cornwall has proposed here today. I urge all members to give this resolution their support.

Mr. Charlton: I too rise in support of the resolution put forward by the member for

Cornwall and I congratulate him, as my colleague did, on bringing this motion forward.

I am going to make a couple of comments which I do not want him to take as jabs at himself. My comments are in response to the member for Leeds who just spoke. Ontario happens to be the largest province in Canada. We have led the way in this province in many, many areas of endeavour in this country, and I think it is just a little bit facetious on the part of the member for Leeds to be chastising the present government when the Conservative government failed for 40 years to put together any serious program to promote tourism effectively in Ontario.

It is good to see that the Conservatives have at least got a few new lights in their caucus to replace some of the deadwood that did nothing for 40 years. We are still the innovators in terms of every issue that this House has dealt with in the last year, so I would put it to the member for Leeds that he had better think seriously about what he says.

Back to the resolution, Mr. Speaker. The resolution is a resolution which can be a good start to some major initiatives in this province. A system that Ontario should have had many, many years ago would go a long way, as the member has said in his own comments supporting his own resolution, to making it easier for people to access tourism facilities in this province.

It is not a very costly approach to that question but there are so many other things that we could be doing in addition. I would like to run through just some of them, so that perhaps the member can think, as a member from eastern Ontario, about ways to get at some other very cheap forms of promotion, not only for the people of this province but also for those who come into Ontario from outside.

I have been a member of this House for 10 years now and, like most of the members from the large urban centres, I have had at least access to cable television stations for a number of years. One of the things that I find when I travel around Ontario is that I know about this facility or that historic site, because it has had some kind of profile in Ontario's history. We learned about it in school, or whatever the case happened to be.

The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation here in the province puts out lovely, big, thick books, which, in detail, run you through the entire province; but when you are planning a vacation you do not want to have to read for seven days to figure out what you might like to do and which of the tourist attractions in this province you might like to go to see.

One of the things that this government could do, in addition to setting up this kind of computer access to accommodation information, to the sights that surround certain accommodation locations and so on, would be, in a very straightforward way, to go out and make a number of tour package videos which we could provide to cable stations across this province. I think, even in locations like Cornwall, we have access to cable stations. There are lots of places in rural Ontario where we do not.

As I travel around this province, I find that I know very little about so many hundreds of lesser-known sites. The beauty and the facilities they have are little known to most people, especially most people who live in big urban centres and who do not get out of their urban centres very often: parks, recreation facilities, camps on the Ottawa River for whitewater rafting, all kinds of things the average Torontonian or Hamiltonian never dreams about except when he watches the wildlife films and the films of whitewater rafting in the Rocky Mountains. They do not think of those things as being close to their own homes, unless they happen to live in Ottawa or in Pembroke.

We could put together some very useful packages to promote this province, and not only here in Ontario to our own citizens to encourage them to spend more and more of their vacation time in their own province. Those packages would be just as useful on all the major cable networks south of the border, which are often-times looking for filler like that, where you have a 10-minute clip of a tour package in eastern Ontario, northern Ontario or the Georgian Bay area.

We have a situation where the tourist industry in Ontario is one of our major industries, yet ever since I have been here, the entire 10 years, we have stood up every year and talked about the problems that exist in the tourist industry. From time to time we talk about retail sales tax breaks on the cost of your accommodation when you are touring in Ontario. We do packages like that.

We also spend millions of dollars on mass media advertising programs in the form of 10-second, 20-second and 30-second clips, all of which look pretty glitzy but, unfortunately, most of which end up focusing on Toronto, Ottawa and the major centres, instead of focusing on some of the really quiet, serene, beautiful facilities we have in this province that we are missing in those targeted advertising campaigns.

We have an opportunity, if we take a serious approach to tourism in Ontario, by implementing

the kind of computerized program the member has suggested and looking seriously at a number of other very cheap approaches to promoting tourism in Ontario in a way that people can view what a trip might look like if they were to take a particular trip that we set out in a video. If you think about the work that has been done in those cable stations, with taping of video shows and the video crews coming into city councils and filming the city council meetings and the other things cable stations have got into, you understand the really minimal cost for which that kind of a program could provide a very beneficial service.

I very much support the efforts of the member for Cornwall and his willingness to stand up as a new member of this Legislature and take positions that, far too often, we have found all kinds of government resistance to in the past.

1040

Mr. Newman: I rise to support the resolution from the member for Cornwall. Maybe I should first read it, to point out the deficiencies in it.

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation should move immediately to implement a computerized tourist reservation system for eastern Ontario similar to the system currently in use in the province of Nova Scotia."

I see nothing wrong with eastern Ontario, but why limit it to eastern Ontario? Where I live, in Windsor, there are more Americans living north of us than there are Canadians in all of Canada. If we want to go after a tourist market, we have the state of Michigan, which is an ideal market. It is close for people. In addition to that, the American dollar is worth so much more; so it is an inducement for the Americans to come to Canada. Also, Windsor and the western part of Ontario are the automotive centre; so that is another inducement for individuals to come. There is the manufacturing of the various automotive components, in addition to the assembling of cars. That is another reason for spreading the interests to all citizens in Ontario.

There is the good Canadian food we could be selling to our American friends; it is easier to sell them that across the border than it is to bring it in from the far eastern part of the province, although I am not saying we should not bring it in from eastern Ontario. In addition to that, we have an attraction that would bring our American friends across the border, and that is the raceway. In the Windsor-Essex county area, we had one of the first raceways developed in the Dominion of Canada. There used to be a Devonshire race-

track, there used to be a jockey club and there used to be a Kennilworth. At that time we catered to those who were living just a few miles north of us.

It is a simple trip for them. Once they get a taste of Essex county, it is only natural that they would like to see what else there is in the province. We strongly urge them in the Windsor area to do exactly that, to come in and sample Windsor and Essex county; they will be so surprised at what they see and how they are treated that the good news will spread to the 10 million or 11 million Americans who live within one day's drive, and in a lot of instances within two hours' drive, of the city of Windsor.

I would strongly suggest to members in the House that they support this resolution but not to limit it to only one part of the province. Let us get people coming to see Ontario from all over the United States.

Mr. Sterling: I rise in support of the resolution of the member for Cornwall. I think it is an extremely useful and constructive suggestion, and I am only chagrined that the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) is not here to listen to the debate, to listen to fresh new ideas, to listen to the members of the Legislature on a subject in which he should be very much interested. As a member from eastern Ontario, I am not very pleased that he is not here today.

Mr. G. I. Miller: He's listening.

Mr. Sterling: He should be here. There is no excuse.

I would like to read from a report of Tourism Ontario to the federal standing committee on regional industrial expansion; I want to quote from an underlined portion of the introductory part of the report, on page 3:

"There remains considerable regional disparity, economic hardship and unemployment in and around numerous communities throughout Ontario and untapped tourism wealth in several areas, wherein the Ontario tourism and hospitality industry can provide diversification and numerous long-term employment and economic opportunities via necessary and appropriate planning and feasibility studies, expanded infrastructure and product development, and co-operative marketing initiatives which can and should be facilitated through an expanded and prolonged Canada."

I believe this resolution speaks specifically to that kind of statement. It offers a positive suggestion in dealing with the marketing aspect of eastern Ontario and the marketing aspect of smaller businesses in eastern Ontario.

By taking the Nova Scotia model, I think the member for Cornwall has struck upon an area that has many similarities to eastern Ontario. They have one large, major municipal area, the Halifax-Dartmouth area, and many smaller regions, smaller counties and smaller communities that are comparable to eastern Ontario as well. The populations in the areas are approximately equal. I think there are about 850,000 people in Nova Scotia and about 1.5 million people in eastern Ontario.

This resolution is also very positive in my view and would help many small businesses in eastern Ontario that are involved in the tourism and hospitality industry but cannot compete with the large institutions that are also located in the large municipal areas of eastern Ontario. The small motel along Highway 2 cannot compete with the Westin Hotel here in Toronto or Ottawa. It needs assistance in terms of dealing with getting to the public in some small way. I believe this kind of a resolution would help, first, the less-populated areas, and second, the smaller businesses rather than the larger businesses.

The third part of this resolution, which I think is extremely good, would help families afford a reasonable vacation in areas that I think have not been explored enough in eastern Ontario. It will encourage, in my view, people who come to our province to visit out-of-the-way places, to visit very quiet and very beautiful places. I think of places such as Merrickville which is located in my riding. I think many more people would go to those places if they could be assured that there was accommodation in those villages that was of a class quality.

Another aspect of this resolution that I believe is very advantageous, is that the scheme sees a day when it would pay for itself. It would not remain a drain on the taxpayer.

The member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. Newman) asked, why is this not done for all of Ontario? I agree it should be done for all Ontario but we have to start somewhere and this government has not paid enough attention to eastern Ontario in the past. I suggest that the unemployment rates in eastern Ontario, particularly in those areas outside Ottawa-Carleton, are probably much higher than those experienced in southwestern Ontario where they have other economic bases to rely on.

I want to refer to a report of the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation round-table conferences on the development of a provincial tourism strategy dealing with eastern Ontario. On page 7 of part 3, it recognizes two problems with regard

to tourism in eastern Ontario. One is high taxes on gas and another that I would like to relate to is the unsupportive signage policies of this government.

To date, we have seen this government fix a tax on gasoline that has resulted in higher gas prices in eastern Ontario. We have heard much in this Legislature about high gas prices in northern Ontario. I want to tell the members of this Legislature that in eastern Ontario they are even higher and this government has failed to do anything about this. That has a very significant impact on travel in eastern Ontario because we are bordered along the St. Lawrence River by New York state, where there are much lower gas prices. We need to compete in the gas price area. I wish this government would do something in that particular manner.

1050

Second, with regard to highway signage, I believe a different policy should be implemented for the less-populated areas of eastern Ontario. We do not have to worry in those areas about an overabundance of signs on our highways because there is not that much population. There is not that much activity over a long period or stretch of roads. If it can be done neatly and if it can be done with taste, then I would ask this government to consider that particular part of it.

When we talk about the attitude of this government towards tourism, I think it is no better explained than in the letter from the Minister of Tourism and Recreation to various people in this province about the recent budget. I want to quote from his tourism-related initiatives. He talks about northern Ontario and he talks about eastern Ontario as two locations in this province. He mentions under northern Ontario that better roads mean better access for visitors. He talks about \$107 million going for northern transportation. He talks about an overall healthier northern economy benefiting tourism, and he talks about \$30 million. He talks about more people with more money to spend, and he talks about \$40 million going to the north, a total of \$177 million.

Then he talks about eastern Ontario, and he talks about two things. He talks about a sound economic base promoting growth of all sectors. He talks about \$5 million to co-ordinate business-related assistance programs. We welcome that \$5 million, but we are talking about \$177 million in the North in the minister's own literature. This is him bragging. He is bragging about giving \$5 million to eastern Ontario, which has more people than northern Ontario, and he is

giving northern Ontario \$177 million in his budget. Second, he of course announces again the office in Pembroke in the home bailiwick of the Minister of Education.

I would like to sum up by reading from this same report on eastern Ontario that I referred to before, and I will read one paragraph because of the time constraints:

"What all the regions appear to have in common is a frustration with the lack of market awareness and appreciation of their areas' special tourism resources and opportunities, with the ineffectiveness of past and present marketing programs, with the lack of support for the tourism industry at all levels."

That is the summary of many seminars taking place across eastern Ontario. This is what the people are saying. The resolution of the member for Cornwall directly addresses it. I hope the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, who is not here today, listens on his television set to what this resolution says and takes some action.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other members wishing to participate? The member for Carleton for three minutes.

Mr. Mitchell: I am somewhat surprised that I have this opportunity to speak this morning because of the representation of our party in discussing the whole issue of tourism in eastern Ontario. What surprises me is that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, who is a member elected from eastern Ontario, and the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes), who is a member elected from eastern Ontario, are not here to participate; at least I have not seen them here, and I wonder. He is the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, and he is not interested.

Mr. South: I'm here.

Mr. Mitchell: I saw the lone speaker up there, and I acknowledge that.

We really treat the tourists to Ontario shabbily. I know that the reason the member for Cornwall has raised this is that tourism is a big issue in eastern Ontario, and I know at the same time he recognizes that we pay short notice or short service or whatever you want to call it to the tourists coming to Ontario. For goodness' sake, they drive through into Winnipeg and Manitoba, and what do they get? The tourists are met with free coffee and everything else and real hospitality. People go to New Brunswick and they are met with an automatic dialling system for reservations. They go to Nova Scotia and they are met with a piper and all that goes with greeting the tourists and making them feel that they are, in fact, very important to that part of the country.

What do we do in Ontario? You come off the Thousand Islands Bridge, you drive along Highway 401, for example, and you may find a picnic area next to the gas stations that dot our highways, which are now going strictly into fast foods. Along our 401 now, nobody is going to be able to get a decent meal, not that I am putting down McDonald's or any of those. But a sit-down meal? Our travellers really are not going to be able to enjoy that sort of thing, because that is how much concern we have about the tourists.

Mr. Sheppard: Come in to Cobourg and get a sit-down meal.

Mr. Mitchell: Maybe in Cobourg, yes.

We really do treat our tourists badly. This resolution by the member for Cornwall certainly is a positive step towards making the tourists feel, yes, they are important to us; yes, we recognize that we have some beautiful things for them to see and we want them to come again. When we can provide services such as the computerized reservation system, the tourists are going to know we care, and they are going to come again.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Cornwall has up to five minutes to make final comments on this debate.

Mr. Guindon: First of all, let me thank the members for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner); Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South); Leeds; Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton); Windsor-Walkerville; Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) and Carleton (Mr. Mitchell) for supporting my resolution this morning.

I would like to cover a few points. The member for Windsor-Walkerville mentioned that maybe it should be for all of Ontario. Let me give the member an example. Ontario never did start one big project as a whole. They always like to try a smaller project. If we can get the support of the House for an all-Ontario reservation system, I would be only too pleased to support that too.

In the throne speech, the Lieutenant Governor mentioned that, like all parts of our province, eastern Ontario's greatest strength is its people. Here we are and we are ready to do something about it. We are ready to go to work and make the tourist population that comes to our area feel at home, enjoy itself and want to stay longer than it is presently.

We have to mention that eastern Ontario is the gateway from Quebec and from New York state. In our area, we do not quite receive the tourists in the tourist season. As the member for Carleton mentioned, they are not piped in as they are in

New Brunswick and they do not have any automatic reservation dialling system as they come into Ontario.

This is an improvement that could come right across Ontario, and it could come in a short time. We are ready to put it to work in eastern Ontario. We know we can use it. The small business operators and the large business operators in the hospitality field are ready to use the system. They are ready to get together to make sure it works and works well.

If we are truly interested in a distinctly increased quality in tourism, this resolution is the stepping-stone to making the commitment to tourism that the government and the Minister of Tourism and Recreation have, making it so that it would be fruitful and productive for all Ontario.

We have to have a focus of attention. The budget estimates for the tourism marketing department of the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation are going to be close to \$30 million this year. Certainly, parts of that could be used for something similar to this.

Can you imagine what it would be like if you could tap the resources of New York City and Montreal? You could have people from New York City say they want to go to Apple Hill, which is in Glengarry, and they could have that information for free. Then they would really be relaxed whenever it is time to come. All they would have to do would be to get here, and they would know they would be getting the best of services.

I think the member for Hamilton Mountain mentioned the jobs spinoff and also his video for cablevision, which is a great idea. It would mix very well with my resolution. On the jobs spinoff, if we could just increase tourism in eastern Ontario by 10 per cent—or in all of Ontario, but let us start with eastern Ontario—it would be incredible. We would be able to assist the Ministry of Community and Social Services by paying less in welfare and other benefits people have to rely on to have a decent living.

This would also all fit in very well with the government's proposed hospitality curriculum which it wants to implement at Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology in Ottawa, ideally to make both of these ideas work together and as much as possible have the reservation system in place long before Algonquin College has done with its first graduates.

Once again, I would like to thank the House for the support members are giving to this resolution.

Mr. Speaker: That completes the allotted time for debate on private member's resolution 14.

1100

MUNICIPAL ROADS

Mr. Sheppard moved resolution 10:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that the maintenance and construction of a good road system is vital to the local, regional and provincial economy and recognizing the increasing gap between road subsidy and the expenditures required to maintain the existing level of service for roads, the government of Ontario should increase the municipal subsidies available to municipalities for road purposes.

Mr. Speaker: The member will have up to 20 minutes, and if you wish to reserve any of that time, please advise the chair.

Mr. Sheppard: It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity to say a few words about my resolution, which addresses the maintenance and construction of a good road system in Ontario.

In a sense, I had hoped the May budget would have made it unnecessary for me to present this resolution. Unfortunately, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) chose to underfund the rehabilitation of provincial highways and the roads, even though his government, and I quote from the throne speech, "appreciates the critically important role that roads and highways play in supporting tourism and all other Ontario industries. The best-made products and the talents of the best-trained work force will improve our competitive position only if we can bring our products to market on time."

In a brief forwarded to the Treasurer of Ontario in March of this year, the Ontario Good Roads Association stated that an extra \$75 million a year for five years would be the absolute bare minimum required to halt the deterioration of Ontario's paved municipal road system. What is more, this amount of funding would not include even one extra kilometre of new road, nor would it include the addition of a new lane to an existing road.

The need for more money for roads is urgent. The price we are paying by putting off road repairs, in construction alone, is just too much to ignore. I am talking not only about the price in dollars, even though it is only common sense to realize that the longer we wait to do the repairs the more expensive and extensive the rehabilitation or reconstruction will be.

I am also talking about a high price to pay in terms of safety, employment, tourism and commerce. All of these factors are seriously affected because the government has not seen fit, now that it has the funds, to do something about our provincial road system before the roads are beyond repair.

With respect to safety, for example, according to the statistics of the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton), more than 250,000 schoolchildren are bused on a daily basis throughout the province. If nothing else, do we not owe it to our children and grandchildren to ensure their safety to and from school by providing the best municipal road system possible?

In addition, emergency vehicles for services such as fire, police and ambulance depend on the road system to respond to situations as safely and efficiently as possible.

I quote from the throne speech, "Tourism is a key source of employment and revenue for the Ontario economy." Notice the phrase "key source." I quote further, "It is estimated that tourism accounts directly and indirectly for at least nine per cent of total employment in the province and six per cent of gross provincial product." If we are to seriously promote tourism in Ontario, we must literally "pave the way" to encourage a strong tourist industry.

Again, to use one of the minister's own figures, 80 per cent of all tourists in Ontario travel by road. We must be able to assure these people that they will be safe while travelling our picturesque highways and that they will not wreck their cars while doing so. How serious can this government be about promoting tourism in Ontario when it is not willing to commit the proper funds to our vital transportation network?

Bad roads cost money every single day. It costs us dearly in vehicle repair costs and fuel consumption. It costs us in highway and road congestion, not to mention how much it costs us in accelerated vehicle deterioration. Deficient pavement surfaces cost each Ontario motorist over \$100 a year in extra vehicle operating costs.

It is a well-established fact that every \$1 spent on road construction and rehabilitation generates over \$1.50 in the economy. This would literally create thousands of much-needed jobs, both on a local level and at the point of manufacture of the products used.

Furthermore, inadequate funding for roads increases industry costs. As a result, this means increases in consumer costs. Approximately 95 per cent of all trips in Ontario are made by road.

The value of goods shipped by road is far greater than that of goods shipped by rail, air and water combined.

For example, the agriculture industry delivers the majority of its products to market by road and reportedly in Metro alone more than \$12 billion in goods arrives by roads. More than 100 million tonnes of freight moved across Ontario by roads in 1986 and goods exported from Ontario via trucks amount to over \$36 million every year.

Retailers have been increasingly relying on the road system for supply of goods and for access by customers. Between 1975 and 1985 the Ontario Good Roads Association's statistics indicated that car registrations increased by 26.9 per cent in Ontario, licensed drivers increased by 36 per cent and truck registrations increased in Ontario by 51.2 per cent. Over 904,000 commercial trucks and tractors were registered in Ontario in 1985 alone.

It is clear that our industries are turning increasingly to the trucking sector to handle transportation of their goods. They cannot afford to be delayed by a congested or deteriorating road system when delivery deadlines demand to be met.

We certainly recognize, as does the Ontario Trucking Association, that heavy trucks put considerable stress on our roads and highways, but most important, trucking contributes significantly to the employment figures, not to mention government revenues, of our province.

Our roads are in desperate need of repair. In the 1984 survey, 61 per cent of Ontario's paved municipal road system needed either resurfacing or reconstruction repairs over the following five years in order to prevent further deterioration.

The road information program surveys indicate that 7.6 per cent of Ontario's highways did not meet Ministry of Transportation and Communications pavement standards; 36.9 per cent are expected to deteriorate to fair or poor condition within the next five years.

Bridges are also in a state of disrepair. The same study indicates there are nearly 1,500 bridges in Ontario that do not meet normal highway standards and 32.5 per cent of the 11,684 provincial bridges need to either be replaced or rehabilitated in the next five years. The cost of this disrepair is a burden to the community and there is no doubt that the poor roads and bridges hinder the efficiency of all types of industries.

1110

Now that the government is in a position to do so, why has it not allocated sufficient funds to

make ours the best municipal road system ever? Our present economy is as strong as the \$1.2-billion windfall indicates. The Ontario Good Roads Association's brief to the Treasurer strongly urged him to ensure that a portion of the windfall be invested in municipal roads. Why was that request not taken seriously?

In April 1985, during the provincial election campaign, the now Premier (Mr. Peterson) stated that he would spend an additional \$40 million per year for five years on rural roads alone. The additional revenue generated by the increased cost of personal and vehicle licences generated that very amount. Why did this government not live up to that election promise in the May budget?

We all know that the Ontario Good Roads Association held its annual conference this past February. In the minister's address to the members, he stated, "The urgent need for transportation funding, both within the provincial and municipal networks, is well recognized by every member of the Liberal government."

If there is any truth to his statement, why was preserving our road system not a priority? Let us ponder for a moment how vital our road system is.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Northumberland (Mr. Sheppard) is not addressing himself to rule 19(d)(4) in that he is reading verbatim from material which has obviously been prepared for him by a researcher.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, I am familiar with the order and I would ask the member not to read his entire speech verbatim.

Mr. Sheppard: Let us ponder for a moment how vital our road system is to the elderly every day of our lives. Roads enable us to get to work and to pick up our day-to-day essentials. Roads allow our goods to be shipped and received. They allow us to get to cultural and social events. They allow Ontarians the benefit to receive or deliver our social and health care systems. Roads, as the lifeline that connects communities, make it possible for families to unite. How can anyone say that we are not affected by the conditions of our road system?

There is no debating that preserving our network of roads is an investment. The cost may be termed high initially, but there are no risks to speak of. The only risks we are taking here include increasing tourism, commerce and employment; those, to me, are risks we cannot afford not to consider. Putting money in our transportation network is an investment with a

focus on the long-term economic impact of transportation dollars.

I am not disputing the fact that the proposed Highway 407 is necessary—on the contrary, I am sure there is an urgent need for it—but this government can no longer reserve its focus for multimillion-dollar projects. These projects, without a doubt, result in a healthy flow of capital into our economy. What is more, the long-term benefits to all of Ontario could not be denied. However, this government, and we as provincial representatives, can no longer ignore the dynamics of equally deserving projects which have just as great an impact on smaller communities. This government must realize that any project, big or small, which creates or maintains jobs for our local work force and brings much-needed social or economic benefits is undeniably crucial.

This to me constitutes a very important investment. I cannot stress enough how urgent the need is for adequate funding for municipal roads. As the minister, Treasurer and Premier are aware, several resolutions were submitted by municipalities throughout the province during the Ontario Good Roads Association's annual conference. Some of them read as follows:

"Be it resolved that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications be petitioned to allocate supplementary funding to rural townships to allow paving on roads where the volume of traffic warrants it."

"Be it resolved that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications be petitioned to consider providing supplementary subsidies for periodic gravel contracts since the regular road budget will no longer support the large expenditures required."

"Be it resolved that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications be requested to increase the municipal subsidies available to municipalities for road purposes."

From my own riding, I have a couple that I received from several of the municipalities.

"Be it resolved that we endorse the position of the Ontario Good Roads Association for increased subsidies for Ontario's decaying municipal roads."

"We urgently request that the provincial government provide additional funding to municipalities in the way of road subsidies to bring our road systems back to an acceptable level."

Those are just a few. Please note that these resolutions come from the towns and townships throughout the entire province, not just from the great riding of Northumberland. All these municipalities agree that municipal roads are in a

bad state of disrepair and that road systems are falling way behind the Ministry of Transportation and Communications' established acceptable standards at an accelerated and alarming rate.

Municipalities are very concerned that putting off road repairs for five years will force them into spending five times as much on major rehabilitation work. They are responsible for the construction and maintenance of approximately 86 per cent of the entire 153,000 kilometres of roads in Ontario.

At present, in many cases, municipalities are raising 100 per cent of the dollars for essential work that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications does not even subsidize. Many municipal governments are being forced to spend dollars on road and bridge maintenance that were originally budgeted for much-needed new construction jobs to hold their road systems together. This is an extremely heavy burden on the tax base of any community, and especially the smaller rural townships.

There is no doubt the province has the money to significantly increase its share of contribution to municipalities for roads and to speed Ontario's economic recovery. This government is in the enviable position of having the resources to put a stop to the deterioration of our valuable road system.

The Treasurer had the best opportunity to win and influence over 1,800 municipalities and failed. He also had the wonderful opportunity to effectively share the province's economic recovery. The Treasurer could not have chosen a better time for replacing if he had planned it, yet his government chose to play coy with the public in view of the anticipated election.

I will reserve the rest of my time for later.

The Deputy Speaker: The member has reserved three minutes and 50 seconds. The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr. Gregory: He is an expert on roads.

Mr. Warner: Just a minute, hang on for a minute, I was about to offer support for the resolution but, provoked, it is a very tentative thing.

Mr. Rowe: We take it back.

Mr. Warner: Okay; just be careful.

My support for this resolution is indeed tentative, and not just because of my experience and my memory. The member for Northumberland, who proposed the resolution, quoted some very startling statistics based on information collected in 1984, which, if we will all just

stretch our memories a little bit, was during the time of the last Conservative government.

What the member has very accurately portrayed is the dismal record of the former government in providing decent roads in Ontario. It is a bit of an irony that the member could conveniently forget the history that preceded the 1985 election in suggesting that the present government is not paving enough roads in this province or paving them properly or repairing bridges.

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Mr. Gregory: You don't have to defend the present government any more.

Mr. Warner: You cannot forget history, as much as you would like to.

Mr. Gregory: You can push it around a bit.

Mr. Warner: No, no; the facts are there. The deterioration of the road system in this province, in municipalities and through the provincial roads, started during the Tory regime. In fact, during that bad decade, the devastating decade as we call it, from 1975 to 1985, when there was an attempt to close hospitals and to cut back on funding in education and to cut back on social services, it included the deterioration of the roads for lack of money to keep the roads repaired and the bridges in order.

As I attempt to navigate my way down the clogged Don Valley Parkway, especially in these last few days because of the extensive repairs it is undergoing, and at night attempt to navigate my way along Highway 401 as it goes east from the parkway and encounter the incredible delays because half the highway is blocked off, I have certainly become very sympathetic with what the member raises. We have some very serious deterioration, and obviously a lot of repairs are required—and throughout the province. Each of us can talk about our own local area, but it is throughout the province.

Highway 401, in the section skirting Metro Toronto, is undergoing major repairs, as are the Gardiner Expressway, the Don Valley Parkway and roads throughout Metropolitan Toronto, but there is another aspect to this which the member did not address and I think is extremely important.

The whole development of the road system is not only for cars and transports, as important as that is, but I think it also has to be put in the context of the development of a good public transit system. If we have a good road system throughout Metropolitan Toronto or other municipalities, it is used by the buses as well or by

trolley buses or streetcars. Obviously, if you pave the roads properly and make sure there are good road connections, and at the same time provide a good light rail transit system or a subway system, then both people and goods can move quickly and that is a benefit to all of us.

I think the development of the highway system in this province needs to be put into the context of the development of an efficient public transit system. What I find painfully frustrating is that both the previous government and the present government have failed to come to grips with having an overall plan for public transit in this province.

We see it now bubbling to the surface over the struggle in integrating the GO Transit system with the Toronto Transit Commission. There is going to be a lot of argument, a lot of heated debate over the next little while as there is an attempt to somehow integrate the systems in order to serve the area surrounding Metropolitan Toronto. That is very important, but it is being done and it will be done in isolation of any overall provincial plan for public transit. To me, that is a mistake.

It has been a tradition in this province that we will allow the residential development of areas first before planning any public transit service to those areas. To me, that is backwards; it is totally backwards. Public transit by my definition includes the development of roads, and the planning should happen first for the development of municipal roads and provincial roads before anyone starts to build homes or develop industrial areas or commercial areas. It makes a lot more sense to develop the road system, incorporating with it at the same time the development of public transit. When you have an idea as to how you wish to develop that, then you look at developing your commercial, industrial and residential areas in some kind of systematic way that makes sense for the growth of your area.

The former government chose—

Mr. Haggerty: They let Frank Drea give that speech four years ago.

Mr. Warner: Yes, and you could give it again today. The member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty) raises a good point. He made a speech like this 15 years ago. He could make it again today to his government, because it has failed in the same way in which the former government failed to pay any attention to that concept. I find it frustrating because when we do not follow that kind of systematic approach we create problems for ourselves. What we are looking at now is urban sprawl in the Metro Toronto area; urban

sprawl that will do none of us any good. We are just sort of nitpicking our way through how the road system is developed to service these new areas and how a public transit system is developed to service the areas.

In conclusion, I support the member's resolution in acknowledging, as he has in the valuable statistics he has brought forward, the failure of the former government to come to grips with providing good roads throughout the province; and of course the failure of the present government to come to grips with the same problem. The answer is inescapable: we need someone else to tackle this problem, and indeed our group is prepared to do that.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Grey-Bruce.

[Applause]

Mr. Sargent: I thank the members very much. They may not be so kind after I finish. This debate may be my last shot, but I just think of the fact that when a racehorse retires they put him out to stud, and that ain't bad.

I am very pleased to take part in this debate sponsored by the member for Northumberland. It gives me an opportunity to put on the record the tremendous leadership of this government in the area of municipal roads funding. The member for Northumberland is doing exactly what he should be doing to press for action, as we did for 42 years when we were over there. But the member has raised an issue of great importance to all of us because the role of good roads cannot be overstated. We depend on them to get from place to place and to fuel the commercial life of our communities.

Good roads are vital to the movement of people and goods and they bring families together. I have been in the selling business all my life and I learned a long time ago that no one gives a damn how good your product is; it is how good your product makes them. Today, I want to say that we can all agree that roads play an irreplaceable part in our lives. That is why I am proud to state this government's position clearly, its commitment to improving the provincial and municipal road structure in Ontario.

In politics, a commitment is meaningless without the proper level of funding. Very clearly, this government has backed this commitment with vastly improved funding levels. Of course, there will be some who will argue that any amount of money for municipal roads is not enough, and I agree, but in recent years this government has increased road funding dramatically and this reverses a trend that for many years saw road funding drop year after year.

1130

What is more, the recent increases have been much above the rate of inflation. Of course, I will review some of the numbers for my friend the member for Northumberland, because these numbers show clearly that this government has the kind of commitment we need to improve our roads network here in Ontario.

While any increase in municipal roads funding is important, it is especially important if those increases are above the rate of inflation. In the past two years the increases have been more than double the rate of inflation.

For instance, in 1986 the basic municipal roads funding increased from \$536 million to \$558.7 million, an increase of 4.1 per cent or a rate equal to the rate of inflation. But when you add in the Ontario municipal improvement fund of \$30 million for 1986, the total increase in the municipal roads funding was at a rate of 8.5 per cent, an increase double the rate of inflation.

This year, in 1987, the basic municipal roads funding increased over half a billion dollars. Once again this year the Ontario municipal improvement fund continues. When you include new allocations from the budget you can add a further \$27.5 million. The total increase in municipal roads funding for this year, then, is a rate of 9.1 per cent.

In the 42-year history of the former government we never had such performance as that. I cannot anticipate the rate of inflation for this year, but with the current rate running at just about four per cent you can easily guess that this year's rate of road funding increases will be at least double the inflation rate.

The recent budget reinforced this government's commitment to an improved road system in Ontario. That budget, while increasing overall municipal roads funding to a total of \$601 million, before including the OMIF moneys, also held considerable promise for all of Ontario municipal governments in the years to come.

As members will recall, the Treasurer outlined plans to increase transportation funding by \$290 million over the next three years. Many of those new dollars will go to municipalities in the form of new roads money. For northern Ontario the budget also had good news. The transportation funding in the north will be increased by 32 per cent to a total of \$107 million this year.

While all of these dollars are being spent in the municipalities, this government has launched or revived a number of highway projects.

Mr. Haggerty: Highway 20—the first time any work was done on it in years was done with the Liberal government.

Mr. Andrewes: I've never heard you read a speech. Who wrote this stuff for you?

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Sargent: Let us talk about the different regions. In the Niagara region Highway 406, which local residents had requested for so many years, will soon be a reality. The Minister of Transportation and Communications visited there last June to announce that work would start this year.

Mr. Haggerty: From St. Catharines to Port Colborne.

Mr. Andrewes: No; It is already in Welland.

Mr. Sargent: Does the member want to get up and talk against this? I will give him the floor if he wants.

Mr. Andrewes: No; I want to hear more.

Mr. Sargent: He is in favour of it? Okay. In Peterborough, residents had long awaited the completion of Highway 115 as a four-lane route linking that city to Highway 401. Again, the minister visited that city and got the project on track. Where were those members all those years?

Mr. Sheppard: Highway 115 wasn't in the budget this time.

Mr. Sargent: Pardon?

Mr. Sheppard: It wasn't mentioned in the budget or the throne speech.

Mr. Haggerty: Go ahead, Ed. You have three minutes.

Interjections.

Mr. Sargent: I am running out of time here. Mr. Speaker, will you give me some time for all this?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Will the members please permit the member for Grey-Bruce to complete his debate.

Interjections.

Mr. Sargent: I think he is very much out of order.

In eastern Ontario, the minister announced work to complete Highway 62 near Round Lake Centre in Renfrew county.

Mr. Andrewes: What about Highway 6?

Mr. Sargent: We will get to that. Of course, I have already spoken about the increase in funding for northern Ontario. The member missed it when I talked about northern Ontario: a 32 per cent increase there.

We can all tell horror stories about roads in our own constituencies, and I have lots up my way. We can all argue that there simply is not enough

to make the kind of improvements that are desperately needed, but I think we have made a very important start. I agree that we had a good minister in Jim Snow, but their policies were bankrupt for money.

Although I have spoken about the vast increases in road funding, I think it is worth while to quote briefly from the comments made by the Ontario Road Builders' Association after the last budget. The members should listen to this; they will like this one. Arthur Ryan, the executive director of ORBA, said: "It is an excellent budget for us. They have certainly started to address our concerns." That is from the horse's mouth. Later he said, "It is a substantial increase for us." Lee Smallman, vice-president of ORBA, referring to the increase in roads budgets, said, "This is the first turnaround and it is long over due."

Just as important is the amount of increase for local roads and the way in which this increase can come about. I have had an opportunity to travel with the Minister of Transportation and Communications since working with him, and wherever he goes he tries to meet with the local elected representatives. Many of the members here recall meetings in their own areas with reeves, councillors, mayors and the minister.

I would like to tell the members, for example that down in Kingston with the member for Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South), we moved in there one morning at six o'clock and we met in Frontenac-Addington every village and township councillor, town councils and city people to review all of their budgets. This is a policy to let everyone know what is going on and that no one is getting more than they should be getting.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Thank you. The member's time has expired.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I am very pleased to join in this debate, and to follow my good friend the member for Grey-Bruce in this very important debate as we both share the same highways. Highway 6 is certainly getting improvement; they put a little gravel on the shoulders and that is it.

I strongly support the resolution presented by my good friend and colleague the member for Northumberland. I would like to highlight the importance of this resolution by reading it into the record once more:

"That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that the maintenance and construction of a good road system is vital to the local, regional and provincial economy and recognizing the increasing gap between road subsidy and the

expenditures required to maintain the existing level of service for roads, the government of Ontario should increase the municipal subsidies available to municipalities for road purposes.”

As a member representing 21 municipalities, I can attest to the very strong support these municipalities have for the intent of the member's resolution. As an example of this very urgent need for extra funding for road improvements, I would like to quote from an article in the *Wellington Advertiser* of May 25:

“Wellington county's 21 municipalities, plus Guelph, have endorsed the funding push by the Ontario Good Roads Association... 'A massive infusion of money is needed,' OGRA president Robert Leggate said in an interview. 'We are pushing for \$75 million annually over the next five years to arrest road deterioration.'”

The article goes on to say, “Wellington has prepared a five-year forecast of \$67.7 million worth of maintenance needed for the county's 550-kilometre road system. The report recommends immediate replacement of 11 of the county's 82 bridges and a long-term program of bridge repair and evaluation to 'ensure public safety and protect the county's large investment in its bridge system.'”

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I have received letters from nearly all my municipalities supporting the brief prepared by the Ontario Good Roads Association, requesting the Premier and the Treasurer to provide additional funding for municipal roads. I would like to read a few of these into the record.

The township of Peel sent a letter addressed to myself:

“Enclosed are copies of letters sent to the Honourable David Peterson and the Honourable R. Nixon on the brief prepared by the Ontario Good Roads Association.

“Council of the township of Peel supported the position taken by the Ontario Good Roads Association, and we seek your support to urge the government to allocate more funds for municipal roads in the budget.” That is what I am trying to do today, to get the ear of the government. I might need some money to do so but I am trying.

“In order for us to maintain our road system at an acceptable level to MTC standards and acceptable to the people who travel our roads on a daily basis, it will be necessary for the government to provide more subsidy dollars.

“We trust that you will consider our request for your support and that you will help to bring the message across to the government.”

I hope the government members are listening. That is signed by Mrs. Christine Oosterveld, clerk-treasurer of the township of Peel.

One paragraph from a letter from Robert Skeoch, clerk-treasurer of the township of Maryborough reads: “The township of Maryborough is faced with the problem of replacing three bridges and culverts over the next few years. Without additional funding from the province of Ontario they would cause real hardship for the township ratepayers.”

From the township of Pilkington: “A relatively small rural municipality supported by a largely agriculture assessment, the township is negated, both by a lack of reasonable provincial road funding support and an inability to further burden the depressed agricultural sector with heavier tax demands, from maintaining the roads to a minimum standard of public expectations.” That is signed by Len Day, clerk-treasurer, township of Pilkington.

I have received similar letters from the town of Harrison, the villages of Elora and Arthur, the townships of Arthur, Erin, Guelph and Minto. Wellington county council, as well as several other municipalities; all support the intent of the resolution presented by the member for Northumberland. I am also sure the vast majority of the municipalities of rural Ontario are very supportive of this initiative, and I am sure the members of the opposition parties which represent rural ridings will bring their concerns to the attention of the government.

The member for Northumberland mentioned that the Ontario Good Roads Association is stating that the government should be providing \$75 million a year, and this is money for repairs and upgrading to preserve the present system, not for new roads. They feel that with an extra \$900 million in windfall revenues, the government has the funds to invest in a municipal roads system. Indeed, the government's revenues have increased 14 per cent and a matching 14 per cent for municipal roads would bring in that \$75 million.

In the recent budget, gasoline tax revenues increased from \$977 million to over \$1 billion, a \$23-million increase. Fuel tax will increase from \$242 million to \$280 million, an increase of \$38 million. The government made a promise to provide an additional \$40 million a year for rural roads. Instead, the government not only increased revenues through gas and fuel tax, but it also reimposed sales tax on heavy trucks and trailers that will bring in revenue of another \$68 million. Surely, if our motorists and truckers are

forced to pay heavy taxes, they should at least be provided with decent roads to travel on.

I might also mention that the Ontario Trucking Association has some comments to make pertaining to the budget. In their legislative report number 3, dated May 1987, they say there is some commitment to roads but Ontario truckers are unimpressed by the Ontario budget. Jim, you are a fairly reasonable man. You will understand that they are not impressed with this budget.

They go on to state: "According to Ray Cope, OTA president, 'The Treasurer now appears to recognize that an efficient and safe transportation network is essential for sustaining economic growth, but he falls somewhat short of providing the amount of dollars needed to upgrade and expand the system.' The budget calls for a \$290-million enrichment in spending on roads, bridges and highways over the next three years. In prebudget consultation, OTA maintained that an injection of \$1.5 billion over the next five years was needed." That is quite a difference. "Moreover," according to Mr. Cope, 'the budgetary estimates show that transportation spending will rise 7.8 per cent in 1987-88, but that is in fact lower than last year's growth rate of 10.2 per cent.'"

It is indeed quite a commitment by the government in the budget. The Treasurer has reduced instead of increased support for the transportation needs of this province. It is a sad indication of the government's commitment to the transportation system, the roads, especially in rural Ontario, that are so vital to the economy of our agriculture in the province.

I urge all members of this assembly to join with the member for Northumberland and pass this very important resolution. I hope the Treasurer and the Premier will take some interest in what we are doing here this morning and will do something about increasing funding to the road system of this province.

Mr. Grande: I too want to rise, and I am thankful for the opportunity to rise, to speak in favour of the resolution from the member for Northumberland. Actually, I want to thank him for bringing this resolution forward, as I thanked the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) last Thursday for bringing forward another very important resolution that dealt with municipal services, namely, the water distribution system. This week we have another resolution from the member that talks about the road system. I am sure that in another week we are going to have another resolution from some member that will talk about other municipal

services that are desperately needed in all our municipalities in Ontario.

We do not often get a chance to talk about our municipalities. The only time we get a chance to do it is to get up on a speech from the throne and talk about our own ridings or to get up in response to a budget and talk about our ridings and the needs in our municipalities. Because we rarely do get a chance to speak about these, I am sure that letters, from all members and I suppose from myself in particular, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) and to other ministers of government flow very freely because of these municipal services and the lack of support for municipal services in our municipalities.

I want to ask the member for Northumberland a question. The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) makes the point very well. Where on earth has he been? Where has his party been in the past 10 years when some of our municipalities have been screaming for support, have been screaming for help? Year after year, we got exactly the same answers.

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Where has he been? Where has the Conservative Party been? Leave that aside; it is history, it is in the past. I guess it has to say *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* for having made mistakes as a government. Let us talk about this government because it is repeating exactly the same mistakes of the past government. In other words, it is leaving the municipalities out there without any great support.

Unfortunately, there is not one minister in his place in the Legislature for such an important debate, but I want to say to the government that while the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent) may show that in this particular year government support went up 5.2 per cent or six per cent or seven per cent, the fact, and he knows it, is that our municipalities are suffering from structural problems in terms of their infrastructure. It is not something that is going to be fixed with a 5.2 per cent increase in one year. It is something that has to be planned over a period of time, a five-year period of time, that says we are going to put in this kind of support because services have deteriorated to the point that unless we inject billions of dollars today we are going to have to inject many more billions of dollars five years from now.

Our road system is deteriorating. In 1985, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications made a study here in Ontario that showed our municipal road system was deteriorating very

fast. For the city of York, which I represent, it showed that for any urban municipality the size of the city of York, it had the worst municipal problems in all the province.

When I see that kind of information and when I get the concerns I get from the people of the riding of Oakwood, I do not say to those people that they are municipal problems: I have to say to those people, "Your provincial government is not responding to the needs of the people of the city of York, not just in terms of roads or water distribution systems or sewer separation, but in almost every kind of municipal service available."

The government can no longer say, "Here is a certain amount of money just to maintain your services." Maintenance of service is not the question today. The question today is redoing, structurally remaking. In other words, it is not putting on tar and patching holes any more. Structurally, some of the roads in our municipalities are not sound to be travelled upon. They are dangerous.

Therefore, while the member for Grey-Bruce and the Minister of Transportation and Communications may say, and may point to some people saying, "Applause, applause, applause for this year; it is a good start," the fact is that they know and the government knows we need plans for a five-year period and we need to inject massive funding into that.

Unfortunately, the federal government is not responding. It is too bad that the federal government is saying, "It is none of our responsibility." I think Michael Wilson is wrong. Michael Wilson is going to have to change his mind on that. The provincial government, on the other hand, is turning around and saying, "Because Michael Wilson says they are not going to spend a penny, we at the same time are not going to inject the funding necessary to look after the concerns of people in our province, in our municipalities."

It is unfortunate, because while the government now may get applause here and there, in two or three years from now, should the government remain, it will not be getting applause. As a matter of fact, more pressure will fall upon the provincial government.

In the little time I have left, I want to provide the government with a solution. Particularly with those municipalities that on a yearly basis get what is called resource equalization funding because they do not have a rich enough tax base to be able to provide services to their people—those amount to a good number of municipalities

in the province—perhaps we should have the land transfer tax revenues that come from those particular municipalities, the kind of tax that is collected from the sale of homes and houses, to make sure we create a special fund for rebuilding the infrastructure in the province.

Mr. Sheppard: I would like to thank those who are going to support my resolution today, especially the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. He mentioned how the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardiner Expressway are deteriorating. Nobody knows more of the traffic jam when you come down the Don Valley in the morning. If you come in late at night, you cannot get down the Don Valley. You have to come down Avenue Road.

I would like to make a comment on the remarks of the member for Grey-Bruce. He talked about all the money that was spent on roads in the past two years. I want to remind him that it was the previous government that brought in the Don Valley Parkway, the Gardiner Expressway and Highway 401.

Mr. Andrewes: Highway 6.

Mr. Sheppard: And Highway 6, if you want to mention it.

I was also interested in his comments about the budget. I do not know whether the member for Grey-Bruce is listening or not. If he would take his seat, maybe he could listen. He never mentioned, and it was not mentioned in the throne speech or the budget, the finishing of Highway 115. I wonder whether the reason it was not mentioned was that there is a Conservative member there and not a Liberal member.

I remind the minister and the Treasurer that Highway 115 is opening up part of northern Ontario, especially the great lakes in the Kawartha area. There are a lot of tourists in that part of our riding. I remind him that Highway 115 should be finished. I travel 115 a lot when I am going home, whether I am coming up in the morning or at night, whatever the case may be.

I would also like to thank the member for Wellington South (Mr. Ferraro) for his comments. I know he has 34 municipalities. I have only 15 but I got a letter from every municipality asking that I put pressure on the Minister of Transportation and Communications and ask for more money.

An hon. member: It was the member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel (Mr. J. M. Johnson).

Mr. Sheppard: The member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel; I am sorry.

Mr. G. I. Miller: We can all use more money.

Mr. Sheppard: Yes, but Highway 115 was not even mentioned. The member for Grey-Bruce said the Minister of Transportation and Communications was down there at six o'clock in the morning. When one of this government ministers comes to my riding, he does not have the decency even to tell me he is coming. Just ask the member from Thunder Bay. I would get up at five o'clock or even 4:30 a.m. if he wanted me to meet him and take him around the great riding of Northumberland.

Mr. Andrewes: Not 4:30.

Mr. Sheppard: Not 4:30? I am used to getting up. The member knows I am a farmer. Do fruit growers not get up early in the morning too?

I would like to thank all those who are supporting my resolution. I do not know whether

the member for Grey-Bruce is going to support it, but if he does not he should support it.

COMPUTERIZED TOURIST RESERVATION SYSTEM

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Guindon has moved resolution 14.

Motion agreed to.

MUNICIPAL ROADS

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Sheppard has moved resolution 10.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 12 noon.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. Partington: An exciting and very successful 42nd annual Canadian Secondary School Rowing Championship was held this past weekend on the 1,500-metre Henley rowing course in St. Catharines.

In total, there were a record 93 schools represented from across the country, from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland, as well as from the eastern United States. Heats were run on Friday and Saturday, with 30 finals run on Sunday.

The trophy for the total points accumulated by men's crews was won by Upper Canada College of Toronto and, for women's crews, by the Ridley College team from St. Catharines. The Ridley College crew defended its last year's win in the senior men's heavy eight race, once again capturing the prestigious Calder-Cleland trophy and contributing to Ridley's overall victory in the total points championship.

Second place in total points was won by UCC, with Denis Morris High School, Lakeport Secondary School and Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, all of St. Catharines, placing third, fourth and fifth respectively.

Rowing is a demanding sport which requires discipline and dedication from all participants on a seven-day-a-week basis. I commend the young people who have participated for their achievements throughout the season and particularly for the sportsmanship and the high level of competition displayed this weekend.

To the athletes, coaches and officials, I would like to offer my congratulations for a job well done.

OVERCROWDING IN SCHOOLS

Mr. Philip: The speech from the throne talks about the need for excellence and quality in education. However, the budget shows that when it comes to capital expenditures, the government is not really serious. I bring to the attention of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) just one example.

St. Stephen school in Rexdale presently has about 800 students. The school was never intended to accommodate that many students. The library is too small and the use is therefore

limited. In order to accommodate the student population, it should have about 2,000 square feet more. The gym is so small that the children's allotted time has been reduced from 80 minutes to 50 minutes per week in order to accommodate every class and, at times, cancelled completely when the gym is required for other needs.

Space has been taken away from the playground by the six portable classrooms that have been inserted in there. The kindergarten rooms do not meet the standards of other schools. St. Stephen's students must be sent to other schools for many programs because of the lack of space.

The parents of the children of St. Stephen ask why their children must be deprived of the adequate facilities that other children in other neighbourhoods and other schools take so much for granted. I call on the Minister of Education to meet with the Metropolitan Separate School Board and to plan whatever corrective action is needed to remedy these serious problems at St. Stephen.

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Mr. Reyecraft: I rise today to advise that CFPL-TV in London recently requested viewers to phone in and offer their support for government action to reduce injuries in hockey.

Pete James, CFPL-TV's sports director, told viewers that "the slashing, high-sticking and cross-checking have turned the hockey stick into a weapon" and that "it is now time to put the hockey stick back where it belongs—on the ice."

Not surprisingly, there was a tremendous response to CFPL-TV's appeal. Over three evenings, approximately 9,000 calls were handled, some from as far away as Pennsylvania and Ohio. In addition, calls were received the following week from many who were unable to get through on the evenings of the show.

I recall that in January, the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) allocated \$1.4 million for a program to reduce injuries in sports and fitness. The minister took this option in response to the concern that the public had voiced against the increasing number of injuries resulting from participation in amateur sports.

The CFPL-TV phone-in has clearly reinforced this public concern. I understand that the minister is currently working to address the safety issue in amateur hockey and that the final report of the Ontario Sport Medicine and Safety Advisory Board is due on June 30. I look forward to

initiatives which will reduce the risk of serious injury in sports.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. McLean: My statement is for the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins). As he is aware, there is a long list of hospitals throughout Ontario, including the Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in my riding, seeking government funding for new or expanded health care facilities. When my party was in power it approved more than \$200 million alone in the spring of 1985 for hospital capital projects in this province, and the list of hospital capital construction projects continued to grow with each passing month.

Hospitals must keep pace with increasing technological developments in the health care field and the growing number of Ontario residents who are using their services, if we are not to put health care at risk. That requires expansion and that means creative methods of providing capital funding must be devised by this government to meet the growing demands of Ontario's hospitals.

I would urge the minister to meet with the Ontario Lottery Corp. to devise a provincial lottery for the purpose of using profits to fund hospitals capital projects. The Irish sweepstakes has proved, over the years, to be a creative and imaginative method for generating hospital construction funds in that country. The success of existing lotteries in Ontario and throughout Canada indicates to me that the people of this province would support a new lottery, especially if they knew that all profits would be used for hospital construction projects in their own communities.

I would urge the minister to vigorously pursue the development and promotion of a new hospital capital lottery program, which I am certain will generate millions of dollars in profits that can be used to ensure that our health care delivery system continues to keep pace with growing demands.

PATIENTS' RIGHTS

Mr. Reville: The executive director of the Canadian Bar Association—Ontario strongly opposes the section in Bill 190 that restores to the review board the right to order treatment over a refusal by a patient representative or family members. The bar association recognizes that mental disorder may indeed compromise the decision-making ability of a patient. It believes, however, that this factor properly enters into only

a decision of whether the patient is or is not competent to make the decision personally.

Once that question is resolved, a competent patient or a competent substituted decision-maker must have autonomy in deciding whether to accept the proposed treatment. This right is unquestionably one held by medical and surgical patients, and we see no reason why it should be withheld from psychiatric patients. In fact, the bar association feels that it is a violation of the equality rights provided by section 15 of the Charter of Rights and that such a legal position could not stand a court challenge on that ground.

BELGIANS IN ONTARIO

Mr. McGuigan: A couple of weeks ago, I was asked to go to the launching of a book called *Belgians in Ontario: A History*, by Joan McGee, an author and academic from Windsor. It was written with the support of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council. It is the story of the development of the sugarbeet industry in southwestern Ontario, later the tobacco industry, and the role that was played by the Belgian immigrants.

They started as migrant workers who came from Belgium to Canada, stayed for a few months and went back each fall. They had experience in sugarbeet growing because, prior to the Canadian experience, they used to go to France. Through that, a number of them decided to come as immigrants and establish their families here, first as workers and sharecroppers, and many of them today are very substantial owners of farms. They moved really from the sugarbeets to the tobacco in Kent and Essex counties, where it has been established ever since the days of the Indians, and they moved to the second belt around Brantford.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

Mr. McGuigan: I would commend the book to anyone's reading.

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WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Pope: I rise to express my dissatisfaction with the report released by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel concerning lung and stomach cancer among gold and mixed-ore miners. I believe my dissatisfaction would be shared in general terms by Jean Larcher and the victims of the mining environment organization in Timmins and by the local representative of the United Steelworkers in Timmins, Moe Sheppard.

Basically, in 1979 I stood in this House as a back-bench member of the governing party of the day to indicate the existence of a Wigle study. That resulted in the Muller study, phases 1 and 2, which clearly linked exposure to silica dust with the development of lung cancer. The standards that have been developed by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel are clearly inadequate to compensate dependants of dead miners.

I think it is incumbent on the government to step into this process, ensure that it is expeditiously dealing with claims and come up with a standard that is the same standard as it has allowed for other lung cancer claims in every other industry in the province.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

CHILD CARE

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The government of Ontario has stated its commitment to building a comprehensive child care system that will meet the needs of all families in this province.

In both the speech from the throne and the budget, we have acknowledged the need for a high-quality, affordable and accessible system—one that recognizes child care as a basic public service and not a welfare service.

Together with my cabinet colleagues, most notably the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Minister responsible for Women's Issues (Mr. Scott), we have consulted widely and weighed the issues and concerns of Ontario families.

Further, we have benefited enormously from the energetic work done by advocacy groups, which have ably demonstrated their real concerns about the future of Ontario's children.

Today, I am pleased to announce the steps this government is taking to build a new system of child care in this province, a system designed to suit the particular needs of those contemporary families.

We are establishing a comprehensive, integrated and affordable child care system for Ontario. An undertaking of this nature is necessarily a long-term challenge. As a result, we will be building this new system in stages. Specifically, we will be working in three-year planning cycles, beginning immediately.

Significant resource commitments are being made to the development of child care. This year, we are allocating an initial annual increase of \$26 million, which brings the total child care budget to \$185 million.

By the end of the first three-year planning cycle, the total child care budget of the Ministry

of Community and Social Services will have grown to a target of \$325 million.

That represents an increase of 133 per cent over provincial spending for child care in 1986-87. These funds will be used to strike a balance between expanding the availability of services and improving the affordability and stability of these services.

I would like to take a moment to explain why we have come to regard child care as one of the most pressing social and economic issues facing Ontario families today.

Child care in Ontario is at a significant crossroad. A larger number of women are now working outside of their homes. In many cases, working women are the sole breadwinners in their families. In others, they are working to keep a two-parent family's income above the poverty level. For these families, child care is a necessity, but it is also essential to make the equality of women in the work force a realizable goal. In this context, the pressure on existing child care supports has never been greater.

Quality child care is in short supply and is increasingly out of the financial reach of many parents. Ontario families need more care and more financial help with that care. They need more information and a greater sense of participation, and they need a wider variety of options.

Child care, as it exists now, is difficult to find in rural areas, for shift workers and for irregular hours or emergency situations. Services for infants, school-age children and children with special needs are particularly lacking. The need for building a new system has never been more apparent.

In addition, because we are talking about the development, safety and wellbeing of our children, we must be stringent about the quality of that care.

In developing these new directions, we have concentrated on all of these issues: accessibility, affordability, integration, expansion and quality. In the years to come, we will be working to increase the flexibility in choice for all Ontario families.

Some of the highlights of these new directions include:

Starting this fiscal year, direct operating grants to licensed, nonprofit programs will be introduced to provide ongoing support. Priority will be given to improving salaries. By improving staff compensation in this traditionally undervalued field, we hope to make child care more affordable, while enhancing quality by attracting and retaining qualified staff.

Depending upon the results of our negotiations with the federal government, direct grants will be extended to the existing commercial sector as soon as possible, provided that federal cost-sharing is secured.

Increases in capital funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services will expand the nonprofit system by supporting the construction of new community-based centres and the renovation and expansion of existing ones. Within the three-year allocation of \$33 million, funds have been set aside for the renovation of vacant school space.

In addition, the government is requiring the provision of child care spaces in new schools. Separate capital funding for this purpose will be provided by the Ministry of Education.

We will continue to increase child care subsidies. Beginning with a preliminary cash flow of \$7.4 million in the balance of 1987-88, this additional financing for new subsidies will represent approximately 30 per cent of the new child care financing.

We will replace the current needs test with an income test as the eligibility screen for subsidy during the 1988-89 fiscal year. Application of the income test to the commercial sector depends upon the outcome of current federal-provincial negotiations. Income testing is considered a simpler and less intrusive system. Together with the subsidy increases, we believe that this will make child care more affordable for a larger number of Ontario families, especially for farmers, who tend not to qualify under a needs test.

Under the new child care development program, we will continue to support the development and expansion of flexible models of service. Extra funding will be directed to innovative shift work and emergency care projects, the integration of children with special needs, programs for school-age children and care for children in rural and isolated communities.

There will be a special emphasis placed on community development.

Child care resource centres, which provide a wide range of child care support services to parents, informal care givers and licensed programs, will be expanded and new centres will be established over the next three years.

Parent information will be developed through the design of a new posting system that will prominently display the results of the annual licensing inspection visit on the centre's premises. Parents will be better able to assess their centre's compliance with the Day Nurseries Act.

The participation of parents in child care decision-making and management will also be encouraged.

Finally, a new child care act that will embody this new vision of a comprehensive, integrated approach to child care will be developed. It is expected to be introduced by the end of the first three-year planning cycle, setting the stage for the second three-year planning cycle.

These are only the highlights. The details of these and other initiatives are contained in the paper, *New Directions for Child Care*, which we are tabling today and which will be in each member's mailbox today.

I believe these new directions reflect the commitment of this government towards the establishment of a comprehensive system of child care in this province, but I must emphasize that the success of this plan depends upon the development of partnerships with parents at the core of the decision-making and with all levels of government joining with representatives of the child care community and with schools and employers.

All of us together are making an investment in our future—our children. The degree of our success will be measured in the wellbeing of the adults of tomorrow. This plan is a cornerstone of this government's commitment to the preservation and enhancement of the family into the 21st century.

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MINIMUM WAGE

Hon. Mr. Wrye: In keeping with the government's commitment to review Ontario's minimum wage provisions on an annual basis, I am pleased to announce today an increase in the general minimum wage to \$4.55 an hour from the present level of \$4.35. This change will take effect in the work week in which October 1 occurs. It constitutes an increase of 4.6 per cent over the current rate, which took effect on October 1, 1986.

The special minimum wage for liquor servers, students under 18, domestics and hunting guides will also rise by 20 cents an hour in the work week in which October 1 occurs. This will mean increases of 5.71 per cent for students under 18 and 5.19 per cent for liquor servers.

As well, maximum room and meal allowances, which employers may charge against minimum wage earnings, will increase to \$57 a week for meals and private room provided and to \$46.50 a week for meals with nonprivate lodgings. In addition, the minimum wage for

fruit, vegetable and tobacco harvesters will rise by 20 cents an hour to \$4.55 on January 1, 1988.

The government has also decided to revoke the standard that permits employers to pay learners 10 cents an hour less than the minimum wage rate in their first month on the job. It is our view that the standard is inappropriate for many easily learned minimum-wage jobs and it is our experience that it is little used.

Finally, I would like to inform the assembly at this time that my colleague the Honourable Pierre Paradis, Minister of Labour for Quebec, has today announced an increase of 20 cents per hour in that province's minimum wage, ensuring that both provinces have the same general rate.

As I have indicated, my announcement today flows from the decision the government made last year to conduct a regular annual review of the minimum wage. I am pleased to report that the consultation undertaken during the review has indicated that this new approach has been received positively by all concerned.

COURT RULING

Hon. Mr. Scott: Today the Supreme Court of Canada refused leave to appeal in the case of Regina versus Ernst Zundel.

As honourable members are aware, the Ontario Court of Appeal set aside Mr. Zundel's conviction and directed that a new trial be held. I am able to advise the House that the crown attorney for the judicial district of York has been instructed to proceed with a new trial as soon as possible.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Je veux dire aujourd'hui que je suis très fier d'être un canadien. Je suis très fier de coopérer avec mes collègues partout dans ce pays pour créer un Canada plus fort.

Today, I would like to provide members with copies of the agreement the first ministers reached yesterday on proposed constitutional amendments. This agreement is one more progressive step in affirming explicitly what Canadians have long believed implicitly. With the changes and the clarifications worked out yesterday in Ottawa, we are continuing a process that began 120 years ago and we are building a stronger Canada. We are building a stronger Canada by bringing Quebec into the Canadian constitutional family.

We can meet our needs only by working together; clearly, this must include the government and the people of Quebec. Through these proposed amendments, we are renewing our

collective spirit for the challenges of the century to come.

We are building a stronger Canada by reaffirming the importance of Canada's multicultural character. The Ottawa agreement includes a provision which expressly protects the recognition of multicultural communities, as set out in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The agreement formally recognizes the existing Canadian reality—that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society. We also recognize that Quebec's distinctness focuses on its French-speaking majority, but it also includes an English-speaking presence.

The agreement makes it clear that Canada, as a mosaic of cultures and languages, can enhance both its bilingual origins and its multicultural evolution with stability, prosperity and security.

Moreover, the Ottawa agreement expressly states that the recognition of Quebec's distinctiveness will not reduce the powers of the national or provincial governments. Canada will continue to speak with one voice—the federal government will speak for all Canadians.

We are building a stronger Canada by recognizing Parliament's ability to spend money on areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. Under the Ottawa agreement, federal spending powers are entrenched. It is now clear that shared-cost programs are established by the government of Canada. The federal government will set the objectives of those programs.

The federal government's direct contact with all citizens of Canada will be maintained, as will be its ability to introduce new social programs. Provincial governments will be able to operate their own programs and receive financial compensation, provided their programs are compatible with the national objectives as established by the Parliament of Canada.

Several other important points were clarified in the Ottawa agreement.

A new provision protects the rights of aboriginal peoples as set out in the Constitution.

The mobility rights in the charter are expressly given precedence over any immigration agreement that might be negotiated. Moreover, the language in the agreement now expresses the simple but important truth that whatever our mother tongue, we are all Canadians.

I would like to take this opportunity to help clarify an area in which there has been some confusion. The process for amending the Constitution agreed to in 1981 included a provision for unanimous approval for amendments to several matters. That provision was expanded under the

Meech Lake agreement to include additional matters such as the Supreme Court of Canada and Parliament. On other items, the process of approval for constitutional amendments, in which no single province has a veto, will continue to apply.

The process of amending a constitution is not an easy one, nor should it be an easy one. There are many different perspectives to consider, and there must be an opportunity for all Canadians to examine the issues and make their views known.

For that reason, we are delighted that the Prime Minister has said there will be public parliamentary hearings to provide full and open discussion. Ontario will follow up on that process with provincial hearings.

Canada's greatest strength is the ability to take the ideas that all Canadians have to offer and to find common ground. We found common ground at Meech Lake five weeks ago. We improved upon it this week. I am confident Canadians will support it, and it will serve them well in the future.

TRANSMISSION LINE

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Concerns have been expressed regarding activities by Ontario Hydro relating to the construction of the eastern Ontario transmission line in the city of Kanata. I would like to bring the House up to date on this matter.

As members may know, the joint board's March 9 decision regarding rerouting and mitigating measures for this line has been appealed. The appeals are before cabinet for consideration, and I can tell the House that this issue does discuss—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am advised that members have not received copies.

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: They just got it? I am sorry.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Yes, they have, Mr. Speaker, or they will in 30 seconds. I shall start from the top.

Concerns have been expressed regarding activities by Ontario Hydro relating to construction of the eastern Ontario transmission line in the city of Kanata. I would like to bring the House up to date on this matter.

As members may know, the joint board's March 9 decision regarding rerouting and mitigation measures for this line has been appealed. The appeals are before cabinet for consideration, and I can tell the House that this issue was discussed as recently as yesterday at cabinet.

The Ministry of Health is looking again into the matter of public health as it relates to high-voltage lines to determine if there is any new, valid evidence that such lines have an adverse effect on health.

I can also tell the members that at my request, Ontario Hydro has agreed to suspend all activities relating to the construction of the line in the city of Kanata until cabinet has dealt with the appeals.

RESPONSES

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Grossman: We in this party have been expressing our concerns about the Meech Lake accord since it was conceived. We have asked many questions and received few answers. Notwithstanding the allegations of the Premier (Mr. Peterson)—which is the most I can say about them—there seemed to be no new answers following yesterday's signing.

On May 4, I told this House of the context in which our party approaches these discussions. As Ontario Progressive Conservatives in the tradition of Robarts and Davis, we believe in a strong national government. We oppose the weakening of its powers and prerogatives.

Let us make one unequivocal point: Our party wants Quebec to be in the Constitution but it must do so as part of a strong agreement, an agreement that strengthens the country as a result of having Quebec sign, not weakens it as the price of getting Quebec to sign.

There is no rush. Meech Lake was a hurried agreement, finalized after a night of nonstop bargaining. It is fair for us and the public to ask for a careful analysis of a document so conceived. If Meech Lake is a good document, time will not now be its enemy.

On May 5, we asked for one week of public hearings on the draft agreement. The Premier said they were not needed. Then he said there was not time and then he changed his mind. He then said outside this House, moments after we again asked for public hearings here and now, that there would indeed be hearings in Ontario. He also said he would ask for hearings on the national level. We in this party have always supported the involvement of all Canadians at all stages in this important process. I might say we are glad the Premier has changed his mind on public hearings and now agrees.

There are many uncertainties surrounding the draft agreement and the new accord. The Premier's assurances today are not backed up by the constitutional experts or by any sense of

unanimity among either the other Premiers or the experts who have perused the document. It is not sufficient simply to state that nothing much has changed. We need the proof.

These uncertainties remain. There are the concerns of the group of 43, the concerns of some of our finest constitutional minds and what appear to be growing concerns in the minds of average people who are eager that this country remain a strong central nation. There are the concerns of Canadians who put the national interest first, as we in this party have always done, who believe we must rise above our own likes and dislikes and our provincial preferences and our provincial politics. For us in this party, the national interest means equipping the federal government with the tools and the resources to do the job. It also implies not a community of communities, not a league, but a nation.

We need time. We now have time. I do not wish today to restate all of the questions we have raised. They are all on the record. They will be asked again at a future time, and there will be new questions. I hope it is understood by all Canadians that we have a duty to ask these questions. They are asked in a genuine commitment to this country and to our party's clear centralist heritage. That heritage lies in sharp contrast to the Premier's vagueness about this deal.

I call upon the Premier today to do several things: (1) explain his views as to the exact impact of what he signed, the impact for Canada and the impact for Ontario; (2) have genuine, unhurried public input and analysis, the analysis he has refused to offer today; (3) set out clearly his understanding of the distinct society and immigration clauses, and the opting out clause.

The ball is now in the court of the Premier. As he seeks ratification for what he has signed, he must analyse, explain and defend what it is he signed. There can be no blank cheques for Confederation.

Yesterday, the Premier said he always thought it was possible to "do a deal." Those are not words of reassurance. Nation-building requires perhaps a different approach from "doing a deal," an approach instead built of principles, commitment and vision.

It would be easy for our party simply to endorse the accord, but we have a responsibility and I am not in public office to take the easy way out. We look forward to the process and hope our concerns will be alleviated, but we are steadfast in our resolve to do what must be done to defend our vision of a strong Canadian government.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. Mackenzie: I want to say how deplorable I find the increase of 20 cents an hour in the minimum wage. We are now going to give workers who are willing to work \$9,400 a year in wages, about \$1,500 or \$1,600 less than the poverty level. We are going to give them \$416 a year more if they work the full year; \$786 a month, which barely pays the rent in a city like Toronto. I find it deplorable. I find it disgusting. I will send one of the pages across the floor of the House with 20 cents for the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). Maybe he can add a nickel to it and call all his friends.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: I would like to respond very briefly to the announcement by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and state, first of all, our regret that there is so little time today to respond. We understand the minister will be away most of next week.

The policy—if one can call it that—he has announced is one that says we will not have policy for another year and a half. The money he announced, he announced as if it were coming out of the provincial Treasury. Half of the money, of course, will be coming from the federal government.

The allocations he indicated for this year show how very little motion has been made through his ministry even to deal with the situation that currently faces municipal centres, nonprofit municipally-run centres that have been depending on transitional grants so that people could send their kids to those centres. What is going to happen to those centres now?

There is a lot less here than meets the eye. The minister, having waited a year beyond his promised day care policy, has produced yet another paltry excuse for a statement.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Rae: I want to respond to the statement of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and simply say to him and to the House that—while there may be an illusion out there that because of the length of the bargaining session, somehow the job has been completed—I want to suggest to the House and to the people of the province that the work is just beginning.

I would remind the House that the last experience we had of constitutional reform, which was in 1980-81-82, was an experience where the government of the day brought forward some proposals which it felt it could

have discussed and debated within the Parliament of Canada within a few weeks.

We then went through one of the most agonizing and difficult national debates, with several revisions and changes in the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in response to a number of legitimate and real concerns being raised by groups from across the country.

Anybody who thinks we will not be going through a similar process with respect to this agreement is simply deluding himself.

I want to start by saying that any agreement which has been willingly agreed to by Quebec is an agreement that all of us must see as an important starting point. That is the position I take on behalf of our party. We see it as an important starting point. We have many questions and concerns that relate directly to the impact of this agreement on our existing Constitution. We will be raising those questions today, and I can assure the Premier that we will be raising them for many months to come. I suspect there will be a great many citizens across the province who will also be raising them.

1410

Let me also emphasize that in bringing these concerns to the House and to the people of this province, I do not think it is sufficient for me or for our party to simply reflect whatever traditions a particular section of the country, or indeed section of our party, might represent. Perhaps because of my federal experience, I have a very strong feeling that we have an obligation to think of Canada not simply as Toronto or Ontario writ large. We have an obligation to recognize that Canada is a very diverse place with many different traditions and, in order to have a Constitution, we have to understand that.

Alors, nous commençons le travail. Il va commencer aujourd'hui avec nos questions dans un sens que dans la province, nous avons des choses à faire pour vraiment arriver à une constitution qui reflète la réalité canadienne; la réalité de tout le pays. Le fait que le Québec soit maintenant un partenaire volontaire dans la constitution, c'est un bon commencement, mais c'est seulement le commencement.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Premier. I wonder if the Premier could take this opportunity to explain to the House precisely what special powers Quebec will need to exercise its right, in the accord he signed, to preserve and

promote the distinct society, over and above the powers the other provinces already have.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The member is referring to clause 2 which recognizes the distinct society. That is an interpretation clause that the courts will use in determining certain areas under their jurisdiction. There is a nonderogation clause that does not alter the existing powers between the federal government and the provincial government. That is subsection 4 of the section my honourable friends refers to. It is an argument that will be put forward with respect to possible legislation or initiatives some time in the future.

Mr. Grossman: As a result of the lengthy sessions the Premier was in, he must surely be able to report to Ontarians and Canadians across the country today as to whether the distinct society clause means anything or not. If it means anything, then it has given Quebec some powers or some special rights or some special privileges; otherwise, Quebec would not have wanted that clause in there.

I wonder if the Premier can describe to us today, having heard Quebec's argument as he did for having that clause in there, what impact he thinks the distinct society will have, given his agreement to having that clause in there.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The distinctiveness of Quebec is recognized inside the Canadian nation. I refer him to clause 2(1)(a) of that particular section as well, which defines Canada as one Canada with English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking Canadians centred in various different parts of the country but all part of the great Canadian nation. That is a clause that could be used by a Quebec government in the interpretation of certain other statutes or acts that may come forward.

If the member is asking me if special and unique powers are conferred that are going to upset the current distribution of powers, I do not believe that is the case.

Mr. Grossman: Clearly, the Premier is unusually uncertain about the impact of the clause he agreed to. Given that, I wonder if I could draw his attention to section 16 of the agreement he has just referred to.

He will know that in section 16 of the document it specifically says that only two of the 34 sections of the Charter of Rights cannot be affected by the distinct society clause. I presume that means all the other sections of the charter that are left out of that saving clause, which include such matters as fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, legal rights, equality rights, official languages of Canada and minority

language educational rights, were not so specifically protected.

Could the Premier tell me why he would have agreed, or what the intent was, to provide protection for the distinct societies of multicultural and aboriginal groups but not for, for example, minority language educational rights?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not agree with my honourable friend's interpretation of the situation. As he knows, there were special concerns raised with respect to the multicultural communities and indeed the aboriginal rights. Frankly, we do not believe they were affected prior to that, but to give that special reassurance those concerns were mentioned specifically. I do not believe it affects other powers under the charter.

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: The leader of the third party is exactly right. When you name two parts of the charter, you, expressly by the courts, are deemed to say all the other parts shall not provide—

Mr. Speaker: Your new question is to whom?

Mr. Grossman: My second question is to the Premier. I wonder if the Premier today is prepared to acknowledge this fact. Two years ago, Quebec received 16 per cent of Canada's immigration. I wonder if the Premier will now acknowledge that the constitutional accord guarantees Quebec 25 per cent of all immigration to Canada.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think that is basically correct. Immigration tends to be allotted as to the percentage of population of the country.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier will recall that last week he denied that was the impact of the same clause. Today, for the first time, he has finally acknowledged that our concerns are right; that is, Quebec will now get a guaranteed 25 per cent.

Given the fact that means approximately 8,000, under that basic guarantee, would be required to go to Quebec as opposed to the rest of the country, I wonder what kind of assurance he could give to the Portuguese, Chinese and Italian immigrant families who are in Ontario and other provinces that this clause will in no way cut out what otherwise might have been immigration flowing from those countries to Canada.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I can give them a blanket assurance that in no way happens; it does not interfere with family reunification. The reality my friend will want to point out, to give a balanced argument to the friends who express concern to him, is that Ontario receives roughly 45 to 50 per cent of all the immigration into the

country. There has been an assertion that the mobility rights take precedence over any agreement that is signed.

I think he can very comfortably go to his friends who express concerns to him and say that has not been affected in any way at all.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier acknowledged that almost 50 per cent of the immigration to this country comes to Ontario. He has acknowledged that he has given Quebec an extra nine per cent of the immigration over what it is currently getting. It stands to reason, there is no other conclusion to be drawn but that a large majority of that—

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has had lots of chances to explain this for the last two weeks and has been unable to do so.

It is inescapable that the immigration shift will have to be from immigrants who otherwise would have come to Ontario and now will be obliged to go to Quebec.

Given the fact that the 10 largest immigrant groups coming to Ontario are from Vietnam, Hong Kong, the United States, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, Poland, India, the Philippines, Guyana and El Salvador—those are the 10 largest groups—could the Premier explain how Quebec is going to get a portion of the population from these countries; or is Quebec, because of its added powers now going to replace some of that immigration with immigration from other countries such as Belgium and France, which was the intent of the Cullen-Couture agreement, and thus exclude some Vietnamese, Hong Kong, Caribbean, Polish and Indian immigration that otherwise would have come to this province?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am sure my honourable friend does not want to raise fears that are incorrect; I am sure he would not want, wittingly or unwittingly, to raise those fears.

I tell my friend that mobility rights are protected. I tell my friend that Ontario gets 45 to 50 per cent of the immigration. I tell my friend that, as I said, immigration tends to be allotted on the basis of population, with a plus or minus factor of five per cent for Quebec under the Cullen-Couture agreement.

There is no reason those people could not go to Quebec and then come immediately to Ontario; there is no prevention of that. I do not want the member to give the impression unwittingly that something is being robbed from Ontario or that family reunification is being interfered with to go to Quebec. That is not what is happening, and I am sure the member would not want to create that impression.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are other members who would like to ask questions.

1420

Mr. Rae: I wonder whether the Premier can explain what he sees as the relationship between the new section 2 of the Constitution Act with respect to Quebec's distinct society, in particular subsection 2(4), and the existing Charter of Rights. The Premier will know that the charter does not grant powers to governments; it grants rights to individuals. The Premier will also know that certain sections of the charter have been expressly referred to in the new package.

There are other sections, if I can just list a few—section 6 on mobility rights, section 23 on minority language education rights and section 29 with respect to separate schools—none of which have been referred to in the general section which talks about how the distinct society will not apply. Can the Premier explain what effect the new section 2 will have on those particular sections of the charter?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The simple answer is that there will be no impact on the interpretation of the charter, but let me go on and explain that. I invite my honourable friend to bring in all the expert advice he would possibly like to bring in on this particular matter. I assure him we went through this in considerable detail with Professor Hogg and others, who I think have quite a profound understanding of this matter.

One of the things the member has to understand is that in clause 2(1)(a) there is a recognition of the minority situation both inside and outside Quebec. Distinctiveness is not defined in terms of language. That is a very key point for people who are interested in the legal details, as is my honourable friend opposite. I do not believe it in any way precludes the operation of the charter or the protection of individual rights in that particular regard; that is why the answer to the question, in brief, is no.

Mr. Rae: I do not want to get into legal technicalities. I want to try to get an understanding of what impact this is going to have and what impact the Premier intended it to have. All I can say is, if he did not intend it to have an effect on the rights of citizens guaranteed by the charter, why did he not say so with respect to the distinct society?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It was not necessary in the circumstances.

Mr. Rae: If it was not necessary in the circumstances, why did the Premier deem it

necessary to refer to particular sections of the charter, which he did with respect to multiculturalism and native people? It would be curious indeed if the impact of that particular reference were to weaken the impact with respect to the rights of other groups who are not specifically named yet who are covered by the other sections of the charter.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: There were many people who did not feel section 16 was necessary at all; who felt, in fact, they were protected. But concerns were raised by those groups, as the member knows, that they were affected by the interpretation of the distinct society. That was put there to make sure those concerns could be laid to rest permanently. That is the reason. We could gather the best constitutional experts in the country and they would argue that it probably was not necessary, but it does reaffirm that very strong commitment to give a comfort level that may not have existed previously.

Mr. Rae: I would like to ask some questions in relation to amending the Constitution, in particular with respect to our native people. The Premier will know that the section "Constitutional Conferences" refers to conferences being convened on Senate reform, fish and sea and "such other matters as are agreed upon." Is it his understanding that the agreement among the Premiers as to other matters has to be unanimous?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Not at all.

Mr. Rae: How many Premiers have to agree with respect to getting native people on the agenda before it gets on the agenda? If it is not unanimous, why did the Premier not insist that it be there in the document we are being asked to approve?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think one Premier can put it on the agenda. If one of them puts it forward and says, "I want to discuss this," it is fine. It is not a big problem.

Mr. Rae: Why did the one Premier who said he was concerned not do something to make sure it is there? If it took only one Premier to get it on the agenda, why did this Premier not put it on the agenda and have it?

I am not asking the Attorney General. Stop prompting. Let the Premier answer. When I want to go to Edgar Bergen, I will go to Edgar Bergen. Right now we are going to somebody else.

What I would like to ask the Premier is this: if it does not require an agreement, which it says—it says "such other matters as are agreed upon"—and the Premier is now saying it does not require an agreement to get it there, why did the Premier

not insist that the question of what happens to our native people be at least as important as what happens to fish?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I know my old friend likes to draw these comparisons, which I do not see, and I think he is getting exercised about absolutely nothing in that particular regard. I said to my friend, if he heard my closing remarks, this would make it easier to deal with the question of aboriginal self-government.

I believe that because we have agreed to an ongoing process of constitutional reform; I believe that because it has not been affected by the amendment section, section 42. As he knows, it goes back to the general amending provision, and I made my pledge to bring this matter up. It is interesting to note that we had a substantial amount of agreement. So my friend is entitled to put on a little show here, but I think it is not necessary in the circumstances.

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Premier. The Premier will know that last year Ontario got 40,000 immigrants. He will know and has agreed that under the Meech Lake accord, which he signed, Quebec gets an additional minimum of 8,000, perhaps 9,000 immigrants. If all those come at the expense of Ontario, that means one out of every five persons who came to Ontario last year would not, in the same circumstances, have been allowed to come to Ontario and perhaps, because of the Cullen-Couture agreement, not to Canada.

I wonder how the Premier can justify having agreed to give Quebec a quota in terms of immigration into this country when it could in fact cost Ontario—

Hon. Mr. Scott: Ontario is getting Manitoba's, Saskatchewan's, Alberta's and BC's immigrants. What are you talking about?

Mr. Grossman: If the Attorney General wants to become Premier he can answer the questions. Was he in the room or was he not in the room?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: You are the guys—

Mr. Grossman: Does he want to let his Premier stand up and answer the questions or just take credit for signing an accord?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: Can the Premier explain why he would have given Quebec a quota which may in fact cost Ontario one out of every five immigrants it has traditionally been receiving?

Hon. Mr. Scott: That is scandalous scare-mongering and you know it.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend purports to speak in the great tradition of John Robarts and Bill Davis. They would be embarrassed if they heard him asserting that.

I think the answer to that question is that immigration is apportioned on the basis of population. Quebec gets 25 per cent in Canada, but on the basis of the attraction of this great province we get about 50 per cent. There is in no way a diminution, and if there is an extra five per cent it will be through an expansion of the quota, so there is no particular problem.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier cannot be that uninformed with regard to the document he signed. The document he signed does not say there will be an extra five per cent allowed into the country. It is not an increase from the overall amount; it says of all the immigration coming to Canada—and the Premier signed the documents—it says of all the immigrants coming to Canada; it does not say there shall be five per cent added.

Clearly, in the document which he quotes so often, it says right up front that whatever Canada's total immigration population, Quebec shall get 25 per cent. It is currently getting 16 per cent. Ontario gets 50 per cent. It stands to reason that if Quebec gets a quota for the first time, nine per cent higher than it is currently getting, most of that is going to come from Ontario.

There is no getting around the fact that that is the document the Premier signed. Let me also be clear that Bill Davis, John Robarts, Pierre Trudeau—

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Grossman: —and all the other fathers of the Confederation he is amending had lots of opportunity to give Quebec quotas on immigration. They put the country and not getting a deal first, and refused every time—

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Grossman: —to give one province a quota on immigration. So we, over here, will not tolerate any lectures from the Premier—

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Grossman: —about the great tradition of nation building. We will speak up for immigrants and family reunification.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Do you have a question?
1430

Mr. Grossman: To simplify it, is it the Premier's opinion that guaranteeing Quebec an increase of nine per cent in its share of national

immigration will have no impact on Ontario and Ontario will not lose future immigration? Is that the Premier's understanding?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The simple answer to the question is yes. We have—

Mr. Grossman: Are you silly? Where is it going to come from? New Brunswick?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Yes, that is happening, presumably at the expense of a lot of other provinces right now, because people want to come here.

My honourable friend may want to argue that we have to go down to our proportionate population, 35 per cent or 36 per cent. In fact, we are getting 46 per cent to 50 per cent of the immigrants coming here. I am very happy. They are very welcome here and will continue to be.

Is he arguing that Quebec should have less than its 25 per cent of the population? It just so happens that Canada has been under quotas at various times and various periods. That is the normal dynamic in the system. I know my honourable friend does not want to spread misinformation about this point—or perhaps he does.

Mr. Grossman: You are spreading misinformation. You categorically gave an incorrect answer.

Mr. Rae: I wonder if I can go back to the question, and it is a very real one, with respect to our native people.

First, we have a description of the country in a new section 2 which describes Canada but which does not mention the existence of our first citizens. That is the first problem. They are omitted from the definition. They are not described as a fundamental characteristic of Canada; neither are multicultural communities. Our native people are not even mentioned with respect to the definition of Canada.

The second problem is there is no guarantee that this can be corrected because they are not even on the list of items that are going to be discussed in the Constitution.

Can the Premier explain those two facts? First, in what he had earlier described as the definition of the country, the existence of our first citizens is not even mentioned. Second, if it is so easy to get these matters on the agenda, can he explain why they are not mentioned in the document?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I would refer to my honourable friend's question. First, it describes a fundamental characteristic of Canada, not the fundamental characteristic of Canada. There are

many other fundamental characteristics of Canada. He and I can have that discussion many times in the future. Since he is asking a legal question, I think one has to look at the legal answer.

Number two, I say to my honourable friend—and I refer him back to my public statement and others as well—Howard Pawley of Manitoba and others are deeply committed to this question, as are we. We are persuaded that we now have a process of institutionalized constitutional reform and when the situation is right—and frankly it is not right politically to raise again because we would have the same result as we did—but we are persuaded, God willing and assuming we are here at the right time, to bring this question up and keep pursuing it.

I would tell my honourable friend we had five provinces out of nine last time. Quebec is now in, so we can get seven provinces and 50 per cent of the population easier with 10 provinces than with nine provinces. I think there is a growing sensitivity in these matters and at the appropriate time, when we think we can do something proceeding towards our goal of aboriginal self-government, then we will bring those matters forward.

I would tell my honourable friend the rights of the aboriginal people are in no way diminished; they are enhanced by the process we have created and by their explicit recognition.

Mr. Rae: I want to return to this. The fact is that the Premier, in his answers to earlier questions from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), referred to this section as the definition of the country. It obviously represents a foundation of constitutional interpretation, and that foundation does not include the group that was here before any of the rest of us or any of our ancestors came here. I think that is not simply a minor omission. I think it is a historic omission which we ought to rectify and which we have an opportunity to rectify.

I want to also ask the Premier, if the question of fisheries was obviously put there as a response to a demand from the Premier of Newfoundland and the question of the Senate was put there in response to a demand from the Premier of Alberta, where is his demand with respect to the native people of Canada?

If it was so important to Ontario and remains so important to Ontario, and if the inclusion of Quebec now makes that amendment possible, why did the Premier not insist that it be right there subsequent to the admission of Quebec into the constitutional discussions, if he is right that it is now a historic possibility?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say to the honourable member, I can only repeat that I think the opportunity for constitutional reform in that regard is greatly enhanced by this matter. There are other people who have other items they would like to discuss at various times—we have property rights—and the problem with doing that is that one either creates an exclusive list or a list that can be expanded.

What I am telling the honourable member, because I think I clearly understand the intention of the first ministers, is that the intention is to expand that over a long period of time. There are a lot of things that are important to Ontario and there a lot of things that are important to other provinces and those will be brought up at the appropriate time. But I do not think my honourable friend can leave the impression that we are not serious about that. We took, with the help of the Attorney General, a leading role in trying to solve that problem the last time and we are continuing to press with that national leadership.

TRANSMISSION LINE

Mr. Sterling: I would like to ask the Minister of Energy a question.

I thank the minister for bringing us up to date with regard to the transmission line in the city of Kanata. As the minister knows, in the appeal by the Bridlewood community to the cabinet, it claimed that at a meeting in November 1984, Ontario Hydro told the community, including Alderman Eva James, that the present right of way could not be used for technical reasons. On page 8 of Ontario Hydro's response, it said that this statement was simply false.

Is the minister going to believe the people of Bridlewood or is he going to believe Ontario Hydro, which this morning, as he knows, went into the area and started building before his cabinet had finished the appeal?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I do not have to take the word of Ontario Hydro. This went through the proper procedure at hearings and everyone who had any interest in this matter was heard. The member knows the reason the lines have to be extended. There is no place in Ontario that has had the expansion and more of a requirement for electricity than the area we are talking about, and we are looking at spending some \$600 million to expand the system to make certain we can deliver power to the people in that very important area.

That has gone through the proper procedure. The appeal has gone to cabinet and now we are very anxious to look at every mitigating circum-

stance or any question the people have. It has gone through the process. Would the member have us change the process, eliminate it; or what would be his response to dealing with this, other than a very, very open concept where everyone concerned has every right to be heard at the hearings? That has taken place.

Mr. Sterling: On Monday of this week, Ontario Hydro told Alderman Eva James—the same Eva James—that it would not begin construction until the cabinet had dealt with this appeal. The minister knows that Ontario Hydro went in there and started construction this morning, notwithstanding what it told Eva James.

Mrs. Judy Hunter went out there this morning and demanded that Ontario Hydro cease construction. What was Ontario Hydro's response? It called in three Ontario Provincial Police cruisers to stop Judy Hunter and one of her friends, who were there demanding that it stop.

The minister stated this afternoon that Ontario Hydro, on his request, had now ceased construction. Why, at 2:10, 15 minutes after the minister made his statement here in this Legislature, was Ontario Hydro still on the damned site? Who is Hydro listening to here?

Mr. Speaker: That is a good question.

Interjections.

1440

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Mr. Speaker, would you lock the cage over there so I can respond?

The fact of the matter is that I know precisely what I am talking about. The fact of the matter is that I shall share with the House and the honourable member, who asks a very good question—if the members are quiet for just enough time for me to respond—that the chairman and the president of Ontario Hydro stopped all work on the eastern Ontario transmission line in the area of Bridlewood in response to my request.

Mr. Sterling: They are still on the site. They are still there.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The member is not very well informed. That is his problem. I have been given the commitment—

Mr. Sterling: It is not my problem. You are going to cause a confrontation out there.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Mr. Speaker, I cannot respond if he is going to shout.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I thought it was a very sterling question. We would like to have a response.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I am not here to be an apologist for Ontario Hydro. If they did in fact take the initiative when they should not have—and there is some question about that, they have responded to my request to stop work. That is what has happened. Regardless of what the member is saying in his place, as of now Ontario Hydro has stopped work until we resolve the problem. I guess the member is just not as up to date as I am and I think he should improve his research.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: I would like to see whether we can get a bit of clarity out of the gobbledegookish kind of statement we had from the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker: Order. A question to whom?

Ms. Gigantes: The Minister of Community and Social Services, in the hope that we can get some clarity out of the gobbledegookish kind of statement and flurry of paper we have had today.

Of the \$9 million in the remaining part of this fiscal year which the minister will be devoting to direct operating grants for nonprofit centres, how much will that give on a per-day basis for a space in one of those centres? How much subsidy will that be? How much direct operating grant?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We are still in the process of consulting with our partners, particularly the municipalities that share the subsidies with us and with the day care centres that are going to receive the money. It is our intent at this time to have a \$3-per-day direct grant. We are prepared, however, to consider options presented to us to vary that, to make it higher for some and lower for others, but it is going to work out to approximately \$3 a day.

Ms. Gigantes: How is the minister going to provide \$3 a day, which is not enough in terms of direct operating grant, when we have roughly 42,000 spaces now in the nonprofit sector and many of those spaces are in municipal nonprofits which are receiving transition direct grants of \$8 to \$10 per day? How is he going to produce that kind of money for each space? Is it not true that if that \$9 million is spread out over 42,000 spaces in the remaining part of the fiscal year, the minister is going to be giving a direct operating grant on a per-day basis of \$1.42?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As I indicated, I have already spoken to some of our municipal partners and they raised the question with us as to whether it would be better to give more money to some centres that have more need and less to others that

have less need. We are prepared to negotiate that.

We hope to actually start distributing the money next fall; we have said the balance of this fiscal year. We feel, in all fairness, that we have an obligation to consult with our partners. I have not been able to do that on any exact basis until today, when I received assurance from my colleague the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and my cabinet colleagues that this money would be available.

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

Mr. Pope: My question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Yesterday the minister had no knowledge of the potential problems caused by the projected overcapacity in the auto industry in North America by the year 1990, some two and a half years from now. He did not know anything about it. Then he denied any responsibility or that he was going to do anything about it. He said that it was not a problem and that he did not share my sense of doom and gloom, as I recall his comments.

Could the minister then explain, if he thinks there is no cause for alarm, the story that appeared in the Report on Business this morning, as it so happens, that indicates "Domestic Car Makers Fight Slide in Sales"? Substantial reductions in car sales will add to the pressure for a renegotiation of the auto pact on a North America-wide basis and will add to the pressure for a 12-month notice under the provisions of that pact. It is already upon us and will become worse in two and a half years.

What studies and what planning is the minister doing to protect 285,000 jobs in this province that directly and indirectly depend on this most important industry?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I guess I would have to repeat in part what I said to the member yesterday, that we are not as pessimistic as he is. There have been predictions for a couple of years now about overcapacity in the auto industry and yet employment and new growth in the auto industry have continued for the last two years. We have growth. Over \$2 billion is being spent by General Motors. We have Suzuki, we have Honda and we have many of these other plants expanding. We do not share the same pessimism that the member has.

Mr. Pope: We are talking about the most major industry in this province, the automotive manufacturing and assembly industry and automotive parts industry, with 285,000 jobs directly and indirectly affected, with projected overca-

capacity by 1990 and with problems already with respect to domestic sales.

Can the minister explain how he can stand in this House and claim to be the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology? How can this government, claiming to be concerned about employment in this province, have no plans and be doing nothing to deal with a major economic challenge for so many Ontario workers in the future? How can he stand there and take that position?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: On the other hand, the member could look at what is happening in Ontario. As I mentioned, he would see the great confidence the auto industry has in this province. This government is working very closely with the auto industry, including the parts industry. We are also working closely with labour and the federal government to make sure certain things are put into practice that will enable us not to have that overcapacity.

CHILD CARE

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to go back to the Minister of Community and Social Services on the day care announcement. As a member of the select committee on health, I am a little disturbed he has not followed even the majority recommendations of that committee that there should be an \$8 per diem direct grant. If we spread this evenly, it would be only \$1.42 for this year in direct grant instead of the \$8 we recommended.

What does this mean for people in Geraldton who are already withdrawing their children because of the requirement there of a \$9 per diem, in Thunder Bay of \$9.75 and in Wingham of \$10.50? If the minister is going to give them that money, who else is going to get any? He has not really thought this through, has he?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member will be aware of the fact that, for the first time, we are introducing in Ontario direct grants to all day care centres. We are starting with nonprofit centres, which, by the way, the member and his colleagues have suggested we do. We are going to expand into the profit centres if we can negotiate the arrangements with the federal government. That is clearly stated in the document. The document also indicates that by the end of the three-year cycle, fully 30 per cent of the new money will be directed to direct grants.

The member will also be aware of the fact that in terms of total new dollars, over that three-year period we are going to put an additional \$165 million into the system. The member will be

aware of the fact that we have several targets we are trying to reach. We want to move to income testing. We want to give direct grants. We want to provide more money for capital spaces. We want to deal with kids who have special needs. We want to deal with families who have needs with respect to shift work and emergency situations. That money is being spread over a number of initiatives.

I am sure the honourable member would not want me to take any one of those other initiatives and direct all of that money strictly to direct grants. That is one way in which we are going to be able to meet a range of needs.

1450

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There was nothing stopping this minister from doing any of those things over the past two years, even though he claimed last December that there were restrictions on him. Our projections are that on the present spaces alone, the 30 per cent figure for the increase in funds he is talking about would still bring a per diem of only \$4.58 by the end of the third year.

I want to ask why has he not brought in other requests from that select committee, one of which was that there should be not only postings of annual inspections but also more inspections, that the results of each unannounced inspection should be posted, that there should be contracts between parents and operators so parents would know what to expect in terms of quality of care and that there should be a posting of financial statements in all the profit and nonprofit organizations around the province. Why did he not move in those areas?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The comments I made today and the document itself clearly speak to the fact that we are going to post the inspection agreements, as we had discussed previously. We are also including in the statement the fact that there is going to be an increase of staff at our various area offices who will do the very thing the member mentioned. We have also indicated in the document that there will be arrangements for parents to participate with the day care providers to a greater extent than they do now. I think we are meeting all those issues. We may not be doing it in quite the way the honourable member suggests, but we are meeting those initiatives.

RADIOACTIVE SOIL

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Today is an anniversary of sorts for the minister because it was one year ago today

when he told concerned residents on McClure Crescent, living in homes built over contaminated soil, that he would respond very quickly to their recommendation and suggestion to him that they be allowed to transfer their mortgages to new homes being built on government-owned land in the north Malvern area.

It was one year ago today, and those concerned citizens have yet to hear from the minister. Can he tell them today, on the first anniversary of his commitment, what he intends to do about the 60 families living under those very serious conditions?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I am quite sure I have responded to many of those home owners in the past through letters. I am not aware that some have not been responded to. As a matter of fact, the matter now falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Government Services for the mortgage arrangements. I am definitely sure that I have responded to those people who asked for transfer of mortgage to the new homes to which they were going.

Mr. Gillies: There are some 100 homes involved in this, 40 of which have been moved under the steps he took some several months ago. There are 60 families still sitting there waiting for an adequate response. I wonder whether the minister knows who it was who said with regard to moving into a house on McClure Crescent, "Nobody in their right mind would do it." Does the minister know that those are the words of his own Premier (Mr. Peterson)? Does he agree with the Premier that nobody in their right mind would live on that street and yet the minister is leaving 60 families right there?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am trying to contain my emotion here. The previous government had this situation sitting there on McClure for years and turned its back on the owners there. It did nothing.

I can go further and tell the member that when I was campaigning in that area, which is in my riding, I was appalled to know that even their member, Tom Wells, whom I respect very much, who was also a minister, took no initiative. As a matter of fact, he phoned me from England and commended me for taking this decision to relieve the people there. The nerve of the member getting up and asking what we are doing about that. We have done more than they did. I have offered to buy 40 of those homes and 25 of those people have so far taken up those conditions and the others are still negotiating with me.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Premier. I wonder if I could ask the Premier to come back to the question of the agreement he signed yesterday. I want to ask him now about shared-cost programs and the spending power. Can the Premier tell us, and he again refers to it specifically in his statement, why the words "the national objectives" are not followed by the words "of these programs"? Does the Premier not appreciate that unless that is clarified, it is always going to be possible for the concept of objectives to be completely watered down?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not believe that. A lot of attention was paid to those particular words. The member will recall that the section talks about shared-cost programs "established by the government of Canada," and then at the end of that section refers to "the national objectives." Clearly, the national objectives relate back to the shared-cost programs established by the federal government.

Mr. Rae: As in all these matters, I can remember when Jean Chrétien and Robert Kaplan, that very distinguished constitutional authority, assured me that freedom of association meant that the right to strike was guaranteed in the Constitution. The Supreme Court told him he was full of it, just about a couple of months ago.

If it is so clear to the Premier and so crystal clear to everybody else, why are those words not contained in the document? Why are they not there? The fact that they are not there always allows the possibility that some judge or some group of judges will interpret it in a very different way.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate that the member may have a different interpretation, but I can tell him very clearly that is the interpretation. We had legal experts advising on this matter. We believe it is quite clear even on a simple reading of the matter.

I am not saying that we could not run into a situation where some of the greatest minds in this country disagree with ours—as a matter of fact, that is probably a very common practice—but I think my honourable friend's concern should be allayed. Premier Pawley was satisfied with those words, as am I. I think the stated purpose has been clearly accomplished and I again want to lay my friend's concerns to rest.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr. Brandt: My question is for the Minister of Labour. On May 4, the minister will be aware

that I raise a question in the House with respect to the Workers' Compensation Board. At that time, in response to my question, the minister indicated that the average increase for the premium cost to employers would be 8.7 per cent for the year. I believe the minister is also aware that the year prior to that, the average increase for premium costs was about 12 per cent, and at that time was about three times the rate of inflation.

Those increases, by way of question, are causing a lot of problems for employers, in terms of funding the total costs, in the operation of their business. Will the minister give this House any kind of an undertaking or assurance that in the next year, predicting the future in terms of the budget requirements of the WCB, the costs of the operation of the WCB will be more in line with the rate of inflation and will not be running at double and triple the rates, as they have been the last two years?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I would have thought my friend, having been a parliamentary assistant to the then Minister of Labour during his first term, and indeed having been a member of the cabinet of the previous government, would have remembered that in 1984 the WCB set about a three-year program in which it could begin to set the tone for reducing and eliminating over a period of time the unfunded liability, which today is at some \$6 billion.

That program, as far as I have heard in my last discussions with the chairman, is on target. The increases, substantial as they were over the rate of inflation, were increases in which there was some advance knowledge that they would be substantially higher than the rate of inflation over the last three years, in order that over the total period of time, which I believe is some 30 years ending around the year 2010 or 2012, the unfunded liability will be wiped out.

Now the parties, the employer community and the WCB, if they have not already begun, will begin over the next short while to discuss the increase to be given next year, and I am sure those discussions will go forward in that spirit.

1500

Mr. Brandt: I do not know how the minister can say the unfunded liability is going to be wiped out over the next few years when it has been increasing at a tremendously rapid rate.

As of yesterday in the standing committee on resources development, both our party and the third party have called for a royal commission, as the minister is aware. The purpose of a royal commission would be to draft new legislation as it relates to the Workers' Compensation Act.

This is in response to the problem of spiralling administrative costs, which the minister must agree are occurring; a huge increase in staff, which we have already raised with him in this House; the unfunded liability, which is now some \$6 billion; and continuing complaints on the part of the workers with respect to the time frames in which their claims are settled, and also the number of claims out there which are not as yet resolved by the WCB.

Will the minister give this House an undertaking that he is prepared to urge the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and his cabinet colleagues to proceed with a royal commission and a full study and investigation into the WCB in order that this matter can finally be resolved?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: No, I will not.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Rae: I wonder if the Premier can explain to us why it is that if the Premiers were so interested in institutionalizing constitutional reform with respect to federal institutions and other matters, that reform has been made more difficult by the expansion of the requirement for unanimity to include the selection of senators and the creation of new provinces.

The Premier will be aware of the very deep feeling in northern Canada with respect to this particular provision. As well, those of us who look forward to the Valhalla day when the current Senate is abolished are wondering how that has been made easier by the fact that everybody, from Prince Edward Island to Newfoundland to Quebec to British Columbia, has to agree with any reform.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the honourable member's advice and I can assure him that I will not put his name forward as one of the potential Senate appointments from Ontario.

Section 42, the section to which my honourable friend refers—

Mr. Warner: Is there a list?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Elie for senator.

Mr. Martel: Never.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It is interesting, though, at least half of the member's caucus has approached me to be put on the list, but I am going to pass that up; half the Conservative caucus too.

That section deals with institutional reform: new provinces, as my honourable friend knows, Senate reform and other changes. There was a sense that, if we are going to do a major overhaul of our apparatus, it is fair that every player would

have a voice and a view in that particular situation. I say to my honourable friend as well that, in practical terms, I do not see a substantial difference from what is there now.

I think the common view of the Premiers, and we have certainly talked about this issue, is that, in practical terms, it would not be any harder than under the existing rules. I do not think that either the Yukon's or the Northwest Territories' position in real terms will be different in the future from what it is now.

Mr. Rae: I do not know whether the Premier is saying it is still impossible or what he is saying, but I just do not think anybody looking at the difference between seven provinces with more than 50 per cent of the population, as opposed to a requirement of unanimity—Confederation has now become a kind of exclusive club in which any one member has a right to blackball the application of any new members coming from either the Yukon or the Northwest Territories.

That is completely contrary to the way in which Newfoundland, most recently, entered Confederation. It is contrary to the way in which Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia entered Confederation. They were all done by means of understandings with respect to the government of Canada.

I would like to ask the Premier why the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are being treated so differently. Did he raise this concern, and was he at all concerned with the requirement for unanimity now being required for any major institutional reform with respect to the federal Constitution?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The concern was discussed—and the member is quite right when he refers to the creation of Newfoundland as a province, and the other ones as well—but in 1982 it was put back into the Constitution, coming under that section that called for seven and 50 per cent to do so. As I said, the feeling was that everyone should have a say. In fact, if new provinces are created, if the Turks and Caicos Islands, for example, became a new province of this country, there is a sense that there should be a veto.

As I said to my honourable friend, yes, it was a subject of concern to all of us in that regard. It was mooted, it was debated. Could we have moved that particular section—and there was some will for doing that—from 41 to 42? Then the question would be on Senate reform and certain other matters. That is why it was left where it is. In practical terms, I do not see a major difference.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Housing, who I believe has left his seat momentarily. Will he be returning? Yes, I see him coming.

Mr. Speaker: I believe he can listen while he is returning.

Mr. Jackson: On May 13 in this House, the Minister of Housing responded to a question by stating that there were 10,000 applications from post-1975 buildings in Ontario awaiting rent review. The following day, May 14, the minister stated in this House, in answering a subsequent question, that there were 15,000 applications from post-1975 buildings waiting for a review hearing. If we are to believe the minister's own figures, it would appear that applications are increasing at the rate of 5,000 per day.

Could the minister tell us the most recent figures he has for the total number of applications now waiting for rent review, the number of those that are post-1975 buildings, and the date for which that information he is going to give us is accurate?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am quite sure that the figures I gave on that day were from advice I had from my staff. If the member wants an up-to-date figure for today, I am unable to give one. I have not taken an up-to-date figure as of today of the number of applications before the rent review process.

However, I can tell the member, as one who tried to drive the fear into people, that the process is in place and there is no backlog, so to speak. We have put in place the necessary steps to be taken to deal with those applications and they will be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Jackson: I find that quite incredible. I advised the minister that I quoted from Hansard of May 13 and May 14. That is over three weeks ago. Both days in the House he read from his briefing book to get those figures. Is he trying to tell this House that in three weeks he has not received any advice from his ministry staff, that they have not briefed him on the total number of backlog applications, and he now can stand in this Legislature and tell us he has the situation well in hand with over 22,000 applications in backlog? My question is, when will the minister have the hearings completed on his new bill?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Three questions were asked.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I repeat, there is no backlog. As I think I indicated to the honourable member at that time in the House about the

figures he was quoting to us: many of those applications were applications which would never have been dealt with previously, and we had expected that amount to come in. It is a transitional period, wherein those tenants living in post-1975 apartments were not protected in the past, and we expected that amount of accumulation. The residential tenancy commissioners are still in place to deal with those. We also have rent review officers to deal with those accumulated amounts that are there.

CENSUS OF ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Grande: My question is for the acting Chairman of Management Board. On May 7, 1986, the minister announced that his government was going to conduct a census of the employment situation of all groups, including racial minorities, to determine what specific employment equity initiatives were to be taken.

The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) in May, 1986 also stated that the results would be available in September and the census was going to be conducted in June, 1986.

Can the minister explain to us and to the racial and ethnic minorities in Ontario why it has taken eight months for that census to be presented to the Legislature? In other words, why has he kept it under wraps for eight months?

1510

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is being extensively reviewed. I presume the material is being collated and printed, and it will be put before the Legislature in due time.

Mr. Grande: Is the minister telling us that the results are so bad? Is he telling us that the barriers to recruiting ethnic and racial minorities in the public service are so pervasive that he is even embarrassed to give us that information and that material? If it takes him eight months to give us a census of what is there, what expectations do the people of this province—the ethnic and racial minorities—have that he will bring forward the so-promised affirmative action and employment equity for women minorities and the handicapped in this province? How long do we have to wait for that?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member, who has been around the Legislature a long time as an elected member and dealing with the public service of the province, knows that there is no legitimate criticism from any group in the province for not having been able to gain reasonable access to jobs in the public service. I can assure him that the material and the specific

information will be laid before the Legislature in the future.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

Mr. Speaker: I would like to inform the members that pursuant to standing order 30, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) and this matter will be debated at six o'clock today. I just wanted to inform all members of that important event.

PETITION

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr. D. W. Smith: I would like to present the following petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We are strongly averse to the removal of the ambulance from the village of Alvinston, and respectfully request your immediate action to have this service relocated in Alvinston to better serve the emergency requirements of Alvinston and surrounding communities."

There are 188 names on this petition.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, just in case there is some uncertainty about this, I thought that there had been a rather belated agreement that we would do four private bills, 101 to 104. I do not think there is any problem with those, but if there is, we can certainly stand them down.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we might hold Bills 101, 102 and 104. We could proceed with 103 today and do the others tomorrow.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We will not do any of them. I would like to call the first order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THIRD READINGS

The following bills were given third reading on motion:

Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Regional Municipalities.

Bill 25, An Act to amend the Wine Content Act.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 62, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the member for Cambridge (Mr. Barlow) adjourned the debate. Are there any other members wishing to participate in the debate?

Mr. Harris: I ask my colleague to lend me a bill.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You do not need that.

Mr. Harris: I do not need that?

One of the problems I would like to briefly put on the record with respect to Bill 62 is more or less what is not in the bill, as opposed to what is in the bill.

Mr. Speaker: The more appropriate time would be in committee.

Mr. Harris: I beg your pardon?

Mr. Speaker: I thought we were referring to what is in this legislation.

Mr. Harris: Then I will refer to what is in the legislation in the context of how silly some of the stuff in here is, in view of some of the stuff that could have been in here. If it pleases you, Mr. Speaker, I will talk about section 3 and section 4.

I have already referred, in my remarks and in my questions to the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) the last time we talked about this bill, to the Dickie Dee controversy that is spreading rapidly across this land. It was one where I thought the Treasurer might have wanted to take a look at whether there was room to make an exception for the prepared ice-cream products, for a number of reasons. One is that most of the products are sold by these vendors. Most of them are students. Most of them are very small business people who are involved in the vending. It is mostly a summer, part-time type of business.

There is an anomaly, in that premium-brand ice-cream sold by the major outlets, let us say, on Yonge Street, is not subject to sales tax, whereas the same product being sold by the Dickie Dee people—I guess, because it has a wrapper on it, it is a pre-packaged product—is subject to sales tax. It is something I regret. It was brought to the Treasurer's attention by a number of people, and I regret it was not looked at in this budget.

Interjection.

Mr. Harris: Is somebody calling me?

An hon. member: No, it is okay.

Mr. Harris: It was not looked at in this budget, and I would hope there is still time, if the Treasurer wishes to move this bill into committee of the whole House, that he could tidy it up, even if it takes an extra day, and I would ask him to consider that—in the unlikely event that he does consider that, though. It is something that the

Treasurer may argue takes more time than that and I guess that is why I wrote to him with the submission a couple of months ago. However, somehow or other that has been slipped up on and perhaps it is something that should be looked at next year if the Treasurer decides it is too late to do so this year.

I just want to refer to the budget, which is the document on which these bills are based.

1520

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Don't let him soften you up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Harris: Do these bills not derive out of the budget?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: They were mentioned there.

Mr. Harris: Yes, I thought so.

We got to this debate faster than I thought so it will just take me a jiffy to find in the budget the revenue side of what comes in from retail sales tax, since retail sales tax is what we are dealing with.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is \$5.6 billion.

Mr. Harris: Is it \$5.6 billion? Is that the figure?

I guess the first figure I want to get on the record is in the last budget that was brought in that featured a white trillium as opposed to the stinking red trillium; that is, the 1984-85 budget. The amount that was brought in from retail sales tax was roughly \$4,239,000,000.

Now, if I can find—the Treasurer just gave me the figure there. Oh, here is the budget.

Today, two years later, we are looking at revenues from provincial sales tax of, if I could just find that figure—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is \$5.6 billion.

Mr. Harris: Is it \$5.6 billion? I always have to check because the Treasurer has a slippery way sometimes of giving figures that sound good, as he did when he tried to hide \$350 million of deficit in this budget and as he did when he played fast and loose with the education funding, which appears to us to add a minimum of \$330 million to the deficit, unless perhaps there is a little inflation involved and it could be \$350 million more to the deficit. It is not hard to read this budget and come up with a deficit of close to \$1.7 billion as opposed to the Treasurer's sleight-of-hand \$900-and-whatever-it-is million.

That is that one; I need to find the revenue. If my colleague could just get me the revenue there for retail sales tax, I think I can go on to something else and come back to that.

I guess the point I want to make—and I will put that figure on the record as soon as I can find it in

this budget—is the enormous increase in provincial revenues that are coming in via the retail sales tax route.

Members can see the Treasurer gave me the figure of some \$5 billion but in actual fact he is now budgeting \$6 billion in retail sales tax. That is the figure I was looking for. The Treasurer tried to slip me some \$5-billion figure, so it was important that I take the time to find that figure in the budget.

So, we are going from \$4.2 billion to over \$6 billion, an increase of close to 30 per cent, I guess—maybe close to 33 per cent—a \$2-billion increase. No, I guess it is 50 per cent. If you go from \$4 billion to \$6 billion, it is not quite a 50 per cent increase in revenue in a period of slightly over two years, or in three Liberal budgets.

I do not know why we are to be so delighted with what is being done in Bill 62. The Treasurer indicates he is giving back \$40 million—I think that was the figure—by putting the exemption on prepared foods up to \$4, presumably because it was a campaign promise, something that was probably dreamed up in haste and thrown out. It is not something we particularly disagree with but it certainly is something we could argue is not very significant—when revenues through retail sales tax are up close to 50 per cent or \$2 billion in Ontario—that the government is going to throw \$40 million back through that vehicle.

We would also argue that through this budget of missed opportunity, the retail sales tax is one of the vehicles whereby the Treasurer could have cut the retail sales tax by a point to six per cent, which would have had a very significant effect on the manufacturing areas of our economy—certainly on the auto sector, on many areas of the economy, on consumer spending.

It could have had a very significant effect, and he still would have had far more money than inflation through the vehicle of the retail sales tax. I guess it points to the very heart of why we are concerned about these tax bills and why we are concerned about the whole budgetary policy of this Treasurer. When we look at figures like an \$8-billion increase in revenue—let me put that into perspective, because sometimes billions of dollars are thrown around and people lose track of how that fits into perspective.

It fits into perspective in this way. If we took the last budget of two years ago when spending was \$26.9 billion, and we took inflation for the three years that this budget is to cover of 4.4 per cent, 4.0 per cent and 4.1 per cent, we would arrive at increased spending of around \$3 billion. If the Treasurer wanted to maintain the same

level of spending as when he assumed office, he would be spending \$3 billion more than was in the 1984-85 budget. But he is spending \$8 billion more, and that includes inflation. I am giving the inflationary increases.

I am also talking about a period when the welfare budgets are down on that base. We have more people back at work. We have less need for short-term work programs except in the north, and we are not getting them anyway. There are far fewer dollars being put into any kind of assistance programs to put some of our foresters and miners back to work than there was in 1984-85. There are far fewer dollars being spent on that 1984-85 base for welfare.

There is far less need, when we look at the community economic transformation agreements that were set up specifically to help those communities where one or more industries in a sector were causing them problems. At that period, there was a little slack there, just by taking inflation, for the Treasurer and the government to be able to spend about \$3 billion more and still have some new programs.

What we have is \$5 billion of excess money. Our party has said a couple of things should happen with that money before the government goes off half-cocked into new spending programs, hiring 6,000 civil servants. I guess the word must be out with the deputy ministers: "You do not have to worry any more. You can spend, spend, spend; you can hire, hire, hire. Away you go. We have lots of money." That seems to be the number one priority.

When we look at this tax bill, it is important this be brought up because we felt, and I am very comfortable putting it on the record, that the first priority with that \$5 billion should have been to reduce the deficit. There was plenty of money there to do it. You can balance the budget. You can take \$1.5 billion—

Interjections.

1530

Mr. Harris: The Treasurer says you need only \$1 billion, but I think he is fibbing; it takes \$1.5 billion based on what I have seen of this budget. You take \$1.5 billion and balance the budget.

Mr. Laughren: You think he is fibbing.

Mr. Gillies: Fibbing.

Mr. Harris: Fibulating.

You still have inflation and a booming economy. You still have less, surely, that would have to be spent on welfare and on make-work programs. You still have \$3.5 billion left and you have a balanced budget. Why does the Treasurer

not give \$1 billion back to the people who are being overtaxed in this province? He would still have \$2.5 billion or almost double inflation to come up with his creative new spending programs.

As we debate this bill, I would argue that one of the methods that would have helped to stimulate the economy would have been to cut the retail sales tax from seven per cent to six per cent. He could have cut it to three per cent; that would have been a vehicle too. I would not have opposed that, but take it from seven per cent to six per cent.

Mr. Haggerty: You would be screaming for more money to build more roads, culverts and bridges. You cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Harris: Let me tell you something else, big mouth. Okay, big mouth, do you want to get into the debate?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. It is getting a little unparliamentary, and the speaker should speak to the chair in this debate.

Mr. Harris: I will be glad to speak to the chair. Let me say that in history, when we look at India or when we look at the United States back in the days of Kennedy when some taxes were cut, there has not been a significant example anywhere in history where a government made a commitment to cut taxes that more money did not come back because of the stimulation of the economy that was there.

Mr. Haggerty: That is not what happened in the United States.

Mr. Harris: The member—I described the size of his yap a minute ago—can stand up in this debate and give me one example otherwise.

Mr. Haggerty: That is not happening; they are getting further into debt.

Mr. Harris: The member will have an opportunity.

Let me give an example. During John Kennedy's days in the United States, they cut the tax on capital gains. The Treasury officials in the United States at that time cut it in half. I guess it went from 50 per cent to 25 per cent. It was cut in half during the John Kennedy days. The tax officials said, "I guess that means we will have only half as much money coming in."

Mr. Laughren: What about Reagan's debt? How about your hero?

Mr. Harris: We are talking about John Kennedy. If the member wants me to comment on the size of his mouth, I will do that too. I have

got away with it so far. I might get away with that too.

They cut the level of taxation of capital gains in half, and within one year there was more money coming in than there was at the higher level. Why? Because of the increased activity it created. I do not think that cutting the tax to six per cent necessarily results in less revenue.

Mr. McGuigan: Why do they have a trillion-dollar debt there?

Mr. Harris: The member will have an opportunity if he would like to speak on it.

What I am really saying is that the Treasurer could have balanced the budget. He could have reduced sales tax by a point. He could have reduced income tax by 10 per cent and he still could have had \$2.5 billion to spend on new programs. If I saw any sign of it in the north in any kind of significant way, I might have more sympathy for the tax grab he has put on the people of Ontario over the past three years, but I have not seen any sign of it in the north.

We obviously are not opposed to the perhaps insignificant bill that is before us today. It is insignificant in terms of the fact that the revenue from this tax is up close to 50 per cent over three years. It is insignificant in the fact that this amounts to about \$2 billion. It is insignificant in the fact of the lost opportunity this Treasurer and Minister of Revenue, this Premier (Mr. Peterson) and this government had to do something good and beneficial for Ontario. They had that opportunity and failed to do it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have the definitive Dickie Doo answer. It is a bit long for the few moments available to me, although the clock is not indicating yet how many moments I have, but they are working on it. So I am going to save the definitive Dickie Doo answer for the windup.

I did want to say at the end of my honourable friend's dissertation that the last substantial change in the sales tax was, I believe, in the principal budget brought forward by the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller), former Premier of Ontario and former Treasurer, when the base of the sales tax was dramatically widened to include Dickie Doos and actually every kind of purchase. That ought to be particularly significant for my honourable friend because we do not tax it by the price. I will let that go.

It is too bad he did not have any clout in his caucus in 1982, not to mix metaphors, at the time of the substantial expansion of the sales tax base which caused so much travail among the people who were trying to make a living selling

ice-cream, sandwiches and so on. There was a tremendous outpouring.

The honourable member may recall that vendors formed a circle right around Queen's Park to protest. There may have been some insignificant withdrawal at the time; I do not recall. But I would be the last to criticize the member for Muskoka, unlike the member for Nipissing, who has just spoken. I want to point out to him that if he had been more influential in the Conservative caucus in those days they would not have had this tremendous expansion of the sales tax base, which I think was the second-largest tax grab in the history of the province.

Mr. Gillies: I do not particularly want to get caught in the middle of the Dickie Dee controversy, but I wonder if I could seek some clarification from my colleague. I thought I heard him refer earlier to a company called Dickie Dee. The Treasurer has now referred to it as Dickie Doo, which frankly strikes me as a little Dickie Dumb. I wonder if my colleague could straighten us out on this matter and all the various ramifications. I am trying to get the flavour of what it is my colleague is getting at here.

Mr. Harris: I am sorry that some of the yappers while I was speaking did not see fit to get up and comment when they had an opportunity. We do provide that time if they have any concern with anything I say. I can only assume they agreed with everything I said; their silence indicates that and I thank them for it.

It is Dickie Dee, of course, as the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) has indicated. I hope that clears up the Dickie Doo/Dickie Dumb/Dickie Dee controversy.

But let me comment a little bit. The Treasurer, or the Minister of Revenue in this case, indicated there was a broadening of the sales tax back in 1982. He is quite right; there was. There was a broadening of the base on a number of tax measures.

Let me take the members back to 1982 and look at the financial situation the province was in. We were in a very severe recession. The tax revenues to the province were down dramatically. Economic activity was down. There was a great need for make-work programs in northern Ontario and for new programs in northern Ontario. There was a great need for welfare programs. There was a great need for programs.

When one has that kind of depression—many have called it the great depression of modern-day times in Canada and certainly in Ontario—there is a need for dollars. Probably appropriately, as I have heard the Treasurer say on many occasions,

that is the time when everybody has to dig a little deeper and give a little more so that we can all survive to see a better day.

Well, we are here with the better day, and it is because of the good planning and the good forethought that we have lived to see another day. Now we are here with the better day. It is time to reduce those taxes so there can be another better day in the future, and that is where the problem is, as the Treasurer ought to know.

1540

The Deputy Speaker: Before the member for Nickel Belt speaks, I might advise the House that because of the inability of the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) to attend the House tonight at 6 p.m., he and the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) have agreed that the debate under standing order 30 will be postponed until next Tuesday at 6 p.m.

Mr. Laughren: I had some second thoughts about pursuing the debate this afternoon, since I spoke on this bill yesterday, but the member for Nipissing has provoked me, even though he is supporting this bill, as I am. I do think I heard the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) state—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Did I hear the member for Nickel Belt correctly that he had spoken on this bill yesterday?

Mr. Laughren: You must have heard me wrong, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Fine. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is what he said, Mr. Speaker. Let's check the record. Otherwise, he is out of order.

Interjections.

Mr. Laughren: I just wanted to say very briefly, just in case I did speak yesterday, that we in this caucus are supporting this bill because of the good things it does vis-à-vis the sales tax. I was really astounded a few minutes ago to hear that the Conservative Party now believes that in tough times, you increase taxes. I did not know that was Conservative economic policy in Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is what they have always done.

Mr. Laughren: That is what they certainly did in reference to expanding the sales tax base. I find that a strange economic policy. It is such anti-Keynesian economic policy on the part of the member for Nipissing.

In conclusion, because I do not want to take up the time of the House for two days in a row on this

bill, I just want to make it clear that we are supporting these improvements to the sales tax.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. I will take it that the member for Nickel Belt is joshing and will ask for comments and questions of the member for Nickel Belt.

Mr. Polsinelli: I would like to find out whether or not the member for Nickel Belt spoke on this bill yesterday.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any further comments and questions of the member for Nickel Belt? There being none, does the member for Nickel Belt have a reply?

Mr. Laughren: No.

The Deputy Speaker: Does any further honourable member wish to participate in the debate? If not, this concludes the debate. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was quite serious when I said I had been provided with additional information about the Dickie Dee situation, which was raised by three honourable members on the opposite side, both in this debate and also by letters received by myself and the Ministry of Revenue and Treasury over the last six weeks.

I understand some of the franchisees had visited a number of the members personally. Being young people and innovative and enthusiastic and in business, there is every reason to want to encourage them in every way we possibly can.

One of the very difficult situations associated with the sales tax on food, prepared or otherwise, is that as soon as you give some leeway in one area, it simply moves off into an area where someone else would certainly prefer not to pay the tax. Actually, to follow the reasoning of the member for Nipissing, the way to really improve the revenues is to abolish the tax. I am not sure how we would pick it up, but he indicated the lower the tax, the more you get. There is some reason to that, unless you pursue it a bit too far, as perhaps I just have.

It might be useful—as it was useful for me, although you feel like sort of an anti-Santa Claus when you read it—if I simply put the information before the honourable members.

For sales tax purposes, hand-scooped or machine-dispensed ice-cream and sundaes are considered to be prepared food products. Pre-packaged individual portions of ice-cream, such as ice-milk, sherbet, frozen yoghurt, sundaes, ice-cream bars and Popsicles, such as those sold by Dickie Dee, are defined as snack foods and are taxable.

Effective June 1, 1987, any transaction of prepared food products sold for \$4 or less is exempt. As no exemption threshold exists for snack foods, no matter where sold—such as in eating establishments or variety stores or by street vendors such as Dickie Dee—a snack food is taxable at a cost of 21 cents or more.

Ice-cream products are differentiated as to being a prepared food product or a snack food on the basis of product and marketing. Whereas an ice-cream cone or a sundae is prepared just prior to consumption, relative to being susceptible to spoilage, prepackaged ice-cream bars, Popsicles, etc., can be prepackaged individually and stored in a freezer for purposes of indefinite storage and thereby offered in competition with other similar snack foods such as chocolate bars.

I would just say, and this is not in the note prepared for me, that I myself sometimes buy chocolate bars and I am always careful to see that the full tax is paid. The only differentiation with ice-cream bars and chocolate bars is the frozen state of the ice-cream bar, so they can be seen as all the same thing.

To redefine individually prepackaged ice-cream bars, Popsicles, etc., as a prepared food subject to the same exemption threshold as ice-cream cones and sundaes would be to invite representation from the potato chip and chocolate bar industries, which are very big industries indeed.

I am diverging from the note prepared. It would be great to say, “Surely we ought to be able to take the tax off that,” but the revenues from those products are substantial, and I mean a lot of money. It is really difficult for me to back off simply because of the tremendously attractive name of this particular product and the fact that it consumes the attention of so many honourable members.

No inequity exists in the ice-cream product industry. Vendors may carry their choice of product—prepared food products such as ice-cream cones, or snack foods such as individually prepackaged ice-cream bars, Popsicles, etc., or a combination thereof—and sell from either mobile or stationary premises. Thus, it is upon the basis of the product sold and not the type of operation that sales attract tax. All vendors in the hospitality industry, including the Dickie Dee type, are authorized to use the tax-included pricing method to simplify calculation and collection.

That is the end of the prepared note. I do not for a moment want to say that is the definitive and final answer. I would hope the buoyancy of the

economy of the province to which so many members have frequently referred would allow us to have this very near the top of the list in the near future, as we look at the possibility of withdrawing from these various tax fields for the convenience of people and for the stimulation of the entrepreneurial spirit.

The honourable members have brought many anomalies to my attention, all of which have been considered very carefully by the disinterested—if I may use that word appropriately—officials of the ministries of Revenue and Treasury and Economics, where the policy is established.

The honourable members will know that in this budget, which was referred to in a rather general way by the member for Nipissing, we did have a reduction in tax revenues on a rather broad base of something over a quarter of a billion dollars. I prefer to refer to it that way rather than as \$250 million. This was for the benefit of low-income individuals and particularly the elderly and farmers. That was the decision of the budget, which the honourable members are invited to support.

In this particular bill, aside from two or three individual administrative changes, the basis is to exempt prepared foods to the extent of \$4. I am very glad to know the member for Nipissing is not even thinking of voting against that.

1550

I should also like to respond to a comment made by, I think, the former minister, the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe), who was concerned about the additional verbiage having to do with penalties for not returning the tax collected by the vendors or returning it incompletely. I just want to mention here, the proposed amendment will split the penalty, which is the traditional one of 10 per cent up to a limit of \$1,000. It will split it into two separate penalties, one under subsection 30(1) and one under a new subsection, 30(1a).

There are several reasons for making this change: First, to clarify the fact that a penalty would be imposed for either situation, that is, either late filing or short payment; second, to give the authority to assess both penalties if the situation is warranted; and third, to make clear that if a return is short-paid, the penalty will be imposed only on the short-paid amount rather than on the whole amount, as previously.

I think the intention of the Ministry of Revenue is, as always, to think of our clients, who in many respects are both the people who remit the tax and the taxpayers in general, and I think this is a nice balance of fairness in this connection.

I appreciate the fact that all members who have spoken have indicated, after some lengthy period of time, that they are prepared to support the principle of the bill.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr. Nixon has moved second reading of Bill 62, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. All those in favour of Mr. Nixon's motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

INCOME TAX AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved second reading of Bill 63, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This bill, an act to amend the Income Tax Act, implements amendments arising out of the budget as well as some administrative and technical amendments. The budget increases the availability of the Ontario tax credit in two ways.

First, the property tax credit enrichment will increase the basic property tax credit to \$230 from the previous \$180.

Second, the Ontario tax credit will be made available to visa students. Persons admitted to Canada from other countries as visitors with student authorization will be eligible to claim Ontario tax credit, subject to the same guidelines that apply to all other claimants. The bill will make these changes effective for the 1987 and subsequent taxation years.

Administrative and technical changes are also being made to bring the act in line with the federal Income Tax Act, in accordance with the tax collection agreement with the federal government.

Mr. Ashe: Can the minister clarify one section? As I read it, frankly, without having looked up the original statute, is he making the three per cent surcharge somewhat more permanent?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The surtax, which I hate to say is permanent, was extended beyond the first year by an amendment last year and was extended without limit. It would be, of course, the will of the Legislature to remove that at some time in the future, I trust.

I think we should point out that it is a three per cent tax on incomes over \$50,000, and we feel it is a reasonably balancing method of increasing revenue. At the same time, we are improving the funding of the tax reduction program, which

means that more citizens will be exempt from paying provincial tax.

The reference in here is essentially to bring it into line with the federal income tax. I should know exactly what this is, and I can get some additional information when I have a bit more time, when I wind up, on a couple of things I will tell the members about later.

Mr. Andrewes: I am not sure I heard the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) respond to the question of my colleague the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe). It was a rather significant question. If one reads the explanatory notes beside the legislation with respect to section 1 of the bill, it says, "Section 2b of the act provides for the payment of a three per cent surcharge and is set out below showing underlined the words proposed to be deleted." I will pass over the next bit. Then it says, "The effect of the amendment is to require the surcharge to be paid on all the tax payable for the year, including tax payable under the forward averaging provisions of the federal act."

The question was whether this makes the surcharge a more permanent tax. I am not sure I heard a response from the Treasurer.

I want to indicate that we will be supporting the bill, but in doing so I want to make some comments with respect to the growth in revenues for the government with respect to the provincial income tax. That growth has been significant, as the members know. From the 1982-83 budget year of \$5.85 billion; it now is projected in 1987-88 to grow to \$9.95 billion. It is becoming a very significant proportion of the government's anticipated income for 1987-88.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It still does not even pay for medicare.

Mr. Andrewes: For medicare; he is right. It still is less than the total health care bill in this province, now projected to be over \$11 billion, but it is a significant amount of revenue for the government.

Part of the reason for this growth, and particularly in the past couple of years the significant reason for the growth, has been the effect of changes in the federal statute that the province is the beneficiary of, once one makes the calculation of tax upon tax. If one goes back to 1982, when the anticipated revenue was at about \$5.85 billion out of roughly a \$20-billion budget, the projection for 1987-88 is not that much changed proportionately from 1982.

In participating in any of these budget bill debates, one has to ask oneself, what is the purpose of this whole exercise? It is probably a foregone conclusion that we are going to support

the bill, as no doubt are my colleagues to the left because it imposes a surtax on those best able to pay. However, If one were to consider the conversations that take place outside this chamber, if I can refer to them, one would assume that certain aspects of one's duties here as a member are perhaps underpaid. I think most of us find ourselves in a position to pay this surtax.

I do not want to prolong the debate lest it appear that I am making an argument on my own behalf, nor do I want to appear to be making an argument on behalf of many of my constituents, particularly those who live in rural communities and derive their income from the soil. The Treasurer will be well aware of the circumstances that confront those people today with rather turbulent conditions in world markets and the somewhat depressed market situation. These people find themselves not in a position to pay the surtax, and in some cases not in a position to pay any tax at all.

1600

It was rather interesting to hear the member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty), who does come from a somewhat rural part of Ontario, defending the high taxes, the highest percentage tax increases on the personal income tax side that this province has perhaps seen in its history, certainly in a good number of years. It was rather interesting to hear him defending the hiring of additional public servants, some 6,000 in total. It was interesting to hear him defend the rather uncreative budget that did not live up to many of the promises or the anticipated commitments the media and the general public had. Unfortunately, the member for Erie is not present to hear my comments now, so I will pass on to other things.

The extension of the surtax, or the making more permanent of the surtax—I think the Treasurer is going to clarify that for me before we pass on from this bill—perhaps could be described as a tax on the rich, a tax on those who, no doubt, have a greater ability to pay it than do others.

I want to make this observation: it is also this group of people who have the ability to invest in this province. It is also this group of people who have the ability or the desire to pay down their mortgages or make home improvements that they have put off for some length of time, which creates work and opportunities for others to share in the benefits of the province. It is also this group of people who can use this money to improve their businesses, had they not had to pay it to Ontario, to improve the productivity of their businesses, to become more competitive, to

create a job or two or three, so that others will be able to share in the benefits of their labours.

It is also this same group of people who might choose to use this money to improve their education, their background, their experience, perhaps to assist a member of their family, to retrain themselves or to take advantage of the educational system in this province, but this government does not seem to have a desire to give people that choice.

Some have described this government as intrusive. Of course, that has been the nature of the Liberal Party in Ontario and in Canada for a good number of years. We would not be surprised if some cynics might describe not only this budget but also the tax structure and the revenue structure of the whole budget as being intrusive.

In closing, I might make one observation. A couple of years ago, the government of Canada and the federal Minister of Finance made some changes in the taxing policy that would allow individuals a once-in-a-lifetime capital gains forgiveness, a \$500,000-exemption from capital gains tax. That action was predicated on the theory that if you allowed people that kind of an exemption, they might be encouraged to make capital investments that would produce a capital gain, and that fuelled the economy and some activity and kept the money in circulation.

At that time, this Treasurer, who was just new to his post, made the observation that he was not supportive of this kind of thing because it was a bit loose, it perhaps invited investments in things that were not work-creating. He suggested that if his federal counterpart were not quick to act, to perhaps reconsider his action, there might even be an opportunity for this Treasurer to be intrusive in that field and to tax away some of that capital gain the federal Minister of Finance saw fit to exempt taxpayers from.

We heard those rumblings back two or three budgets ago. We have not seen any activity, and I say to the Treasurer I am pleased at that; we have not seen this government intruding in that area. But it does seem somewhat inconsistent, when the Treasurer comes forward with a surtax on those who have that higher income level premised on the basis that they have the ability to pay, that they are wealthy enough to pay the surtax, yet he has set aside for the moment his grumblings and his rumblings about the principles of the capital gain tax.

The Treasurer says he has not lost hope. Perhaps that is true. I will be here in my place to speak against that kind of activity when in fact he

takes that action. I only want to make that observation because it does seem somewhat inconsistent to, on the one hand, be prepared to tax those who allegedly have the ability to pay, to apply this surtax, but on the other hand to kind of forget about this other principal concern the Treasurer had some two or three budgets ago.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any comments or questions?

Mr. McGuigan: I rise to defend my—

Mr. Speaker: I just asked if there were any comments or questions, referring to the comments made by the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes). The member has no comments on that member's comments?

Mr. McGuigan: That is what I was going to do.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry.

Mr. McGuigan: At least I thought so. If I am wrong, the Speaker should tell me.

The member for Lincoln was commenting about my colleague the member for Erie and his principle of heavy taxation in the good years. Ever since the 1920s, when Lord Keynes brought in the theory of taxation, governments in the United States and Canada have been following Keynesian economics. The theory was, of course, to tax heavily in good times and tax lightly in bad times, but very few governments ever had the courage to carry forward the increasing of taxes when the good times came along. For that reason, we have gone through a series of depressions and boom times, building up constantly higher and higher debts.

I just want to point out to the member that the various things for which he is criticizing the member for Erie were the items the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) was extolling as a great system of financial management.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I will just make a comment on the honourable member's speech.

Both section 1 and section 5 deal with the surtax in rather minor ways. Since it was introduced two budgets ago on a one-year basis and then continued the second year, and there is not an amendment in this year to stop it, the officials felt it was necessary. I support them in this—perhaps I feel it was necessary and the officials support me in this—that all of the income reported at the federal level goes into the calculation of whatever the surtax would be. I believe it is anything over \$5,000 of taxable income.

The specific explanation is as follows: "The amendment recognizes the extension of the surtax to beyond the 1986 taxation year and provides for the computation of the basic federal tax according to the forward averaging provisions of the federal act. This makes the Ontario surtax more equitable and consistent with the ongoing relief provisions conferred by forward averaging under the federal act." I think that should clear it up once and for all.

I would also like to say in the few seconds remaining, that I do not feel uncomfortable with the surtax at all. I do not go around writing on walls, "Make the rich pay," but every time I see it, I read it. I do not apologize for strengthening the tax reduction for low-income citizens in this. I simply ask the members to compare that with the initiatives taken at Ottawa, where they absolutely abolished the tax reduction program that had been part of the policy of the previous administration and gave a \$500,000 capital gains exemption for the other end. There is a difference between the Tories and the Grits; maybe not enough, but there is some.

Mr. Andrewes: To my colleague the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan) who wanted to give us some background on Lord Keynes, I certainly appreciate having that bit of history because it is very important. I am quite sure that in the course of this debate, it will become even more important. Of course, I do not disagree with the member about taxing in good times to build up those things that one needs to keep sacred and whole in preparation for the future. I do not think that is such a harmful thing to do.

The member is a farmer and he knows very well that when you collect your reserves in the good times, the banks are very anxious to see you. It is not a bad principle that during those good times, you pay off some of those debts. This Treasurer has kind of acknowledged that but avoids telling us how he is going to do it.

I am still going to have to reread what the Treasurer read into the record with respect to the surtax to understand it more fully, but he tells me it will clear it up once and for all. I sense what he is saying is that the surtax now is a permanent tax and that we will have an opportunity to remove it in future Tory budgets.

Mr. Laughren: It is a pleasure to take part in any debate that amends the Income Tax Act. I am somewhat enthralled by the Treasurer's new sloganeering. His new approach to taxation in Ontario is to make the rich and poor pay. He has expanded the slogan we all know so well.

Mr. Wiseman: Which category are you in?

Mr. Laughren: I am somewhere in the middle, as most democratic socialists tend to be.

Mr. Wiseman: Ian Deans does not feel that way. He does not put himself in that category.

Mr. Laughren: I think he is struggling. He is in the middle of the upper-income group.

Mr. Speaker: Is he referred to in this bill?

Mr. Laughren: No.

I must say that when the government brought down the throne speech, there was what I would refer to as a mask of civility to that speech. However, when the budget came in, the harsh reality of the measures in the budget washed away that mask and we are left with a kind of tax regime that has not changed a single thing of substance in Ontario. When you make a comparison between the kind of revenues coming into the province now from income taxes and the kind of relief given to low-income taxpayers, it reveals the Treasurer for the kind of tax man he really is.

For example, just in the past two years since the government changed, the amount of income tax that has come into the provincial Treasury has increased by \$2.7 billion. That is the increase in provincial income tax. It is not just because the economy in Ontario has been buoyant. As a percentage of total tax revenues in the province, it has gone from a little more than 26 per cent to a little more than 29 per cent. It is not just that the income tax revenues are buoyant; income tax has gone up as a percentage of total revenues.

Despite this \$2.7-billion increase in provincial income taxes, the low-income end of the scale got very little of it. As a matter of fact, it really is the most disgraceful part of the entire budget. I thought that a couple of weeks prior to the budget this party laid before the Treasurer a number of means by which the system could be made fairer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It was very constructive.

Mr. Laughren: It was very constructive but the Treasurer totally ignored the very instructive suggestions we had for him.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is all in there.

Mr. Laughren: It is all in the back of his head and it will never get to the front. I am not sure why it will not get to the front. I will not get into speculation about what is in there between the front and the back.

Mr. Epp: Are you ever nasty today. What did you eat for lunch?

Mr. Laughren: Not so. I am very unhappy that given the amount of money the Treasurer had, he would do so little for low-income

taxpayers in Ontario. In one case—I will get to it in a few moments—on the property tax credit, he did not even keep up with the rate of inflation in increasing the property tax credit.

To stick specifically to the income tax revenues for the moment, the Treasurer gave the low-income taxpayers in Ontario \$10 million in relief out of a windfall, just in this year alone, of something like \$670 million in provincial income tax revenues. Ten million dollars for low-income taxpayers: I do not think that is any significant recognition of the problems of low-income people in our society. That is why I call it a mask of civility. Today, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) stands up and gives the minimum wage earners in this province a 20-cent-an-hour increase. It surely is only a mask of civility when they deal in such a token way with the people who need relief the most.

With income tax, there was an opportunity for the Treasurer to do something that would not have bankrupted the province. As a matter of fact, if our figures are correct, and one is always at risk when making projections, by our calculation everyone in the province below the Statistics Canada poverty level could have been given relief from any kind of provincial income tax whatsoever and it would have cost the Treasury a little more than \$100 million this year. Those are not small potatoes—I am not suggesting that—but it was within the fiscal means of this province to do that. The Treasurer instead chose to give them \$10 million and did not make a significant impact on low-income earners whatsoever.

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As a matter of fact, the level at which Ontario taxpayers now pay zero income tax is still \$200 below the poverty level by our calculations. I will reword that; I do not think that is a fair description of it. The zero tax level now in Ontario is almost \$2,500 and that is \$200 below what the 1981 zero tax threshold would have been if inflation had been built into the system. Perhaps that is a little clearer for the Treasurer. It is not even keeping up with the rate of inflation.

What I found so hard to take—duplicitous is a strong word—was the misleading statements in the Treasurer's budget that said "the current tax system is failing the tests of fairness" and, "Today, I am bringing forward...measures designed to ease" the tax burden for low-income Ontarians. I find those more than misleading.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I did not say eliminate the tax burden.

Mr. Laughren: No, the Treasurer certainly did not. For that I will give him credit. He did not

say eliminate it. You get more ease from a Pepto-Bismol tablet than from the Treasurer's measures.

When the Treasurer's staff came into the lockup I said to them: "Perhaps we could be specific. If you have a family of four, a single income earner in the family and that income earner earns \$15,000 or \$15,500"—I believe I said to them specifically—"in a year would that person still pay provincial income tax?" They scratched their heads and said, "We do not have any model built up but we can find that out for you." They came back a few minutes later and said, as I recall, "Yes, that person will be paying \$450." It was more than \$400 anyway. They would still be paying more than \$400 in provincial income tax for earning a salary or income of \$15,500.

I ask the members to think how low that is. They still have to pay more than \$400 in provincial income tax with the normal level of deductions with the two children and spouse to support. That is no kind of measurable relief for low-income earners. What really disappointed us was that at a time the Treasurer could have done it, he chose not to. There was obviously a deliberate decision not to do it.

The other area that bothered me so much—as a matter of fact, I raised it in the Legislature a couple of days after the budget—was when the Treasurer announced an increase, and he referred to it in his opening remarks this afternoon, in the property tax credits that would go from \$180 to \$230, which would cost the Treasury, I think he said, about \$85 million a year.

When we did our calculations on the value of that property tax credit and backed it up to the introduction of it when it was first announced, we found that it actually had not even kept up with the rate of inflation. As a matter of fact, it is a drop over last year of \$12 million in absolute figures. Last year, the value of the tax credit was \$292 million. This year it is \$280 million. It is an absolute drop in dollars. For that, the Treasurer pretended to take some kind of credit.

I am going back now to when the government changed. If you build in the inflation factor, it is closer to \$40 million, so we were disappointed when the Treasurer did so little for the low-income earners in Ontario.

Whenever I see the Treasurer taking a shot at the federal government about the capital gains relief, which I do not mind him doing, I think to myself: "Wait a minute now. The Treasurer is having it both ways. He is taking his shots at the federal Tories for eliminating the capital gains

tax and then does not do anything to make up for it at the provincial level." I recall very well that it was the former Treasurer, the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller), who eliminated succession duties in Ontario. Not only is that offensive to the whole principle of equity and redistribution of wealth, but also it is saying in a very loud and clear way that not only can you keep more of what you have while you are here earning your income, but also you can pass it on. There is no redistribution attempt at all when you do not have any succession duties.

I stand to be corrected on this but I think there is not another western industrialized country that does not have succession duties. I do not think there is any other. If there is, I would be interested in knowing it. We allow people to accumulate enormous wealth and then to pass it on to the next generation. There should be taxation on succession.

I hasten to add that I would exempt family homes and family farms for very particular reasons; I have no problem with those kinds of exemptions. But at least there should be succession duties in Ontario. There is no reason not to have them. We had them before. The Tories in Ontario removed succession duties and you would think that the Liberal government would put them back in. At the time the Tories in Ontario said, "We are doing away with succession duties because capital gains will look after that." That is not happening any more, yet this government has chosen not to do it.

We are not talking about the kind of money that comes in from sales tax, income tax or corporation tax, but we are talking about a principle. We are talking about sending a signal out that our society is more equitable than it was under the Tories. There was an opportunity for the Treasurer to send out that signal by imposing a succession duty tax and he chose not to do it. I do not understand that.

I think I know what happened. I do not expect the Treasurer to admit this, but I think what the Treasurer did was to say: "Now we have an opportunity here with buoyant revenues to bring in a budget that has no increases at all. It does not matter if some of them would make sense or not. Forget it. We are not having any tax increases. I want that signal out there. No tax increases. Absolutely none. Do not give me any malarkey about there being opportunities for revenues here or there being opportunities for increasing taxes on cigarettes. No, no. I want the principle out there that there are no tax increases in this budget."

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Hear, hear.

Mr. Laughren: That is correct. The Treasurer can gloat about that all he likes but it has clouded his judgement. There was an opportunity to impose some taxes that would have made the tax regime in Ontario much better than it is now. I can recall my suggestion for an increase in the cigarette tax. It seems to me that if the Treasurer would put aside his own constituency for the moment—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is not fair.

Mr. Laughren: Why? Are there no tobacco farmers in the Treasurer's constituency?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You are suggesting I respond only to them.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the member. I am just wondering whether you are speaking to order 28 or order 6?

Mr. Laughren: Yes, I am, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order 28-Bill 63?

Mr. Laughren: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: You were. Okay; fine.

Mr. Laughren: I thought maybe the Speaker was losing track. We are talking about the Income Tax Act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: How did tobacco creep into it?

Mr. Laughren: I suppose I should get off the tobacco tax.

Anyway, there are some aspects of what the Treasurer has done that we support. We support continuing the three per cent surcharge. It is on taxes in excess of \$5,000, people who pay income tax of more than \$5,000. I think the Treasurer indicated that applies to total incomes of around \$50,000 and up. We do support that. Making the surcharge permanent is something that we support as well. If at some point that can be removed, fine, but that can be done through another budget.

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We are going to support this bill, even though it is clear we could vote against it. It would not be considered an act of nonconfidence in the budget because, as I recall the accord that was signed, it was agreed that individual bills could be defeated without it being a sign of lack of confidence in the overall budget. I am sure the Treasurer is heaving a sigh of relief that is in the accord signed between his party and our party.

In conclusion, we are going to support Bill 63, although, as I said earlier, we are very disappointed at the Treasurer's refusal to introduce an

element of fairness that heretofore has been missing in the province in the entire tax regime.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to comment briefly, if I may, and point out to the honourable member that although he feels the tax reduction program is inadequate, since the government took office it has applied \$35 million—it is now annualized at \$35 million—to tax reduction. He is correct that it increased by \$10 million this year. While he thinks that is inadequate, and frankly I agree with him, I am in a position where I have to make the balance between his position, representing many in the community, and the position put by some people in the Progressive Conservative party, also representing many people in the community, who felt we should have reduced the deficit even more.

The idea he has that we might very well have raised taxes is not really responded to by everybody in the province, although it is true there are many people who feel that some tax or another might have been increased. Even the idea of a succession duty is not the wildest idea I ever heard of. Some of the people advising the government tend to get a little tired when they even think of it, but it is certainly an idea that has to be given careful consideration. Although that is not very satisfying to the honourable member, I am just glad to say that to him.

The Ontario tax reduction in fact does mean that there are now 600,000 people in Ontario paying no tax at all at the provincial level and 60,000 more paying reduced taxes. I suppose the reason I particularly like the tax reduction concept is that you get a big bang for the buck. Mind you, if one gets up to the level the honourable member is recommending, substantially at the poverty level or even above—I hate to use that particular adjective; I feel it is inappropriate—then it gets costly.

Mr. Laughren: I am sorry if the term “poverty” offends the sensitivities of the Treasurer. I suppose I would be sensitive and defensive about it too if I had done as little for low-income people as the Treasurer has.

I can recall, a number of years ago, the Treasurer expressing dismay at the kind of taxation policy we had in the province when the Tories were in power. He expressed dismay about the capital gains.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was always fair, sensitive and understanding in my criticism.

Mr. Laughren: And I appreciated his comments earlier that my suggestions were very constructive. I hope the Treasurer will not just

say nice things, but will do nice things when it comes to effecting tax change in his next budget.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am glad to have a moment to respond to the little exchange about the use of the word “poverty.” I think the honourable member is right in criticizing my reluctance to use it, except it may be that I am a lot older than he is. I feel that a poor person is a person who is without medical care, who is without access to an adequate education, without resources to provide for the family in situations of need and want. I do not feel the policies of the government of Ontario, both now and previously, have left a significant proportion of our community without the basics of life.

The quality of life is something else. Then, as we move beyond the provision of these basics, as the honourable member would wish the government to do, and that every member here would wish the government could do, we are getting into something else. I am not going to argue about it, and I do not know what adjective to substitute that really indicates my feeling. I do not want to dwell on that because we all know of inadequacies in the community. The basics are provided for, we talk about a welfare net, or something like that, and members may feel there are holes in it, but for my view, I think the governments of Ontario over the years, and the governments of Canada over the years have not been unduly callous in recognizing their general responsibilities. There is lots more to be done, and I do not deny that.

All members know that this is a minor bill. All of us, as taxpayers in Canada, are expecting to be informed by the Minister of Finance for Canada, on June 18, 14 days from now, as to what his proposals are in more far-reaching tax reform. There is no doubt that these will have a greater impact on this province than any other province in Canada.

The member will be glad to know, as everyone else would, as I mentioned in the budget, Michael Wilson has done a good job in keeping the Treasurers informed as much as he can, consonant with his own responsibilities, and listening to our advice.

Mr. Laughren: So that makes you an accomplice.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If I am an accomplice in tax reform that moves towards fairness and equity, then I am proud of it. I will reject the word “accomplice” and just say that we are a co-operative jurisdiction and I do not object to that. It does mean, however, that once the basis of tax reform is made clear by the government of

Canada, and they move toward enactment, I think there will be every reason to believe that this House will be presented with alternatives that will parallel that and perhaps compensate for those things, if they are necessary to maintain our revenue with a solid base.

There have been a number of references made to the productivity of the income tax itself, and that is true. The fact that we are very close to \$10 billion is amazing and surprising right across the board. We have all agreed, even the spokesman for the Progressive Conservative Party has agreed, that on the basis of fairness, the income tax is the best measure of the ability to pay. The agreement is complete on all sides in that regard.

While we did broaden the base, strengthen it two or three years ago, the economic buoyancy of the province on that base has been quite responsive. The base itself and the changes in the tax going back to the budget of 1985, returns us about an additional \$800 million this year. That is quite significant, but it is not exactly off the scale. I think the actual, economic buoyancy is responsible for about an additional \$100 million over the projections of those budgetary changes that we made at the time.

This series of amendments actually reduces our revenues by approximately \$250 million, not entirely in this area referred to here, because there is also some reduction of our revenues associated with farm tax changes. While this reduction is not a reduction in rate, it is a reduction in the revenues that would otherwise have come into the consolidated revenue fund without the changes that we are putting to the House.

I can understand why all members are in support of these amendments. We feel they are useful and, frankly, I find them appreciated in the community. I am not looking for appreciation—that is not why we are here, as we all know—but at least they are understood by the people who are affected. I think that is healthy and democratic.

I appreciate the fact that all parties are in support of the amendments.

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The Deputy Speaker: Mr. Nixon has moved second reading of Bill 63.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Deputy Speaker: I believe when we were last on this debate, the member for Burlington South had the floor.

Mr. Jackson: I am pleased to continue responding on the government's May 19 budget announcement, particularly since the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is still in the House this afternoon and he will be leaving within the hour by his government-chauffeured limousine, off to the great community of Burlington South to attend a Liberal fund-raising event. I believe it is \$100 per person for this cocktail get-together with our Treasurer, and I thought it would be quite appropriate this afternoon that I could perhaps assist the Treasurer with some of his crib notes for that wonderful speech they are anticipating down at the Burlington Golf and Country Club.

An hon. member: There is a little note of jealousy in his voice.

Mr. Jackson: They are up to 38 ticket sales.

An hon. member: They are ahead of you.

Mr. Jackson: Well, I do not want to plug one, but we are having a fund-raiser the following evening and the Treasurer is most welcome. It is a heritage dinner, including my good friends from the Ukrainian and the Croatian and the Austrian communities, which are sponsoring it on my behalf.

An hon. member: Good people.

Mr. Warner: How much?

Mr. Jackson: It is at half the price the Liberals are charging, but we anticipate about 350 people.

Mr. Warner: That's \$50.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Wait a minute; what are we charging?

Mr. Jackson: One hundred dollars a pop.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Golly.

Mr. Jackson: It is only a cocktail party, and the Treasurer is well noted for his sobriety. I suspect he will painfully have to go through the evening without watching the cash register ring with all those liquor taxes coming into his revenues—as if they had not already been growing over the last year.

The situation in Burlington has been well documented with respect to its response to the Treasurer's budget. There are so many comments I believe I could objectively convey into the record that may assist the Treasurer. I will, and had he been here when I started my comments yesterday, he would know that I compliment him for a couple of points in his budget. In fairness, that is only appropriate when

a budget attempts to address a certain number of new program needs.

But by the same token, I indicated, with particular respect to the expansion of chronic and acute care beds for Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, that we will not see one of those beds operational for at least five years and that there is a solution which the honourable Treasurer could consider for considerably less dollars. It would provide at least 30 acute care beds that would free up the three-and-a-half-year waiting list for the citizens in my community, who are also represented quite well by the member for Halton-Burlington (Mr. Knight), who I have to believe shares my concern that we need rather immediate relief and not the long-term pronouncement that was made two weeks ago by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston).

The mayor of the city of Burlington, Roly Bird, expressed concern about the announcements with respect to funding for road reconstruction and for GO Transit. My mayor was quoted as saying he was quite sceptical of the \$28 million, the 9.5 per cent increase in funds for municipal roads.

He said, and I will quote just one statement, "Any money is welcome and is certainly needed, but there are 637 municipalities in the province, so how much of the \$601 million is coming to southern Ontario, or particularly to Halton region?"

This is a particularly appropriate comment for the mayor of Burlington to make, because on several occasions he has attended meetings with all the members of the provincial and federal Legislatures, and road reconstruction moneys has always been a high priority. It is such a high priority that a recent report on their capital needs, prepared by the staff of the city of Burlington, in consultation with the region, has identified an estimated \$35 million in immediate road reconstruction needs that should be addressed—and that has been communicated to the government—and, over the 10 years, a cost of approximately \$111 million.

Surely, the Treasurer is not going to try to convince this House that those dollars, when applied across the province, are going to be able to address, even partially, the needs that have been expressed by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, particularly by my mayor, Roly Bird.

He goes on to suggest that there are reasons these funds have not been forthcoming, that there has been a preoccupation in other areas. He indicates it will seriously affect the transportation

network, and will seriously affect the commerce and trade in this province if we allow that situation to deteriorate further.

With respect to the GO Transit announcement of \$100 million, following the budget announcement, I did not immediately rush off to the Treasurer's reception. I immediately approached the Minister of Transportation and Communications, the member for Scarborough East (Mr. Fulton). I asked him quite clearly and directly, would he please tell me whether those \$100 million would be allocated, in part or in full, to expansion of the current system at either the east or the west end of the GO Transit system, for expanding full service to the community of Burlington and possibly on to Hamilton? The minister said something quite interesting to me. He said: "No. There are no moneys for expansion. These are basically dollars for retrofit and upgrade."

That may sound rather innocent, but when pursuing what he meant by retrofit and upgrade, we now come to realize that the government is seriously looking at creating a fee or a charge for Ontario commuters who park at GO Transit stations and use the service. Part of this announcement could and will most probably be used for creating a situation of toll charges for parking privileges at the GO Transit stations all along the current network.

No wonder many of the editorial comments have made reference to the Treasurer giving with the one hand and taking with the other hand. I think this is one point which has not been fully exposed in the media, but I am pleased to bring it to the attention of the House, because it has a direct impact on the community of Burlington.

On the environmental front, the Treasurer will be at a lovely golf and country club overlooking Burlington bay, and I want him to be mindful of the kinds of requirements of the sewer system and municipal infrastructure in the Hamilton-Burlington area.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Is that still the richest community in Canada?

Mr. Jackson: No, actually Markham is.

However, what I would like the Treasurer to realize is that in his budget he has \$8 million put aside for a comprehensive waste management program. He talks about funds for upgrading landfill sites and for developing waste management facilities. We wonder how many new dollars might find their way to Halton region, which has been struggling with a landfill site for the last 10 years. Based on the criteria, it looks as though none of those dollars will find their way

into our community. If his \$8 million is in any way a commitment to upgrading landfill sites, I would like to remind the Treasurer that he is going into a community tonight that recently spent \$1 million in a control order just to clean up an old site, the Bayview dump site in our community, only about a mile and a half from the golf club at which he will be speaking.

The Treasurer gave the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) \$14 million for consulting studies. I really find it interesting when we are going to study the condition of sewage lines again and again. We are going to do that over a three-year period. One has to wonder how many of those dollars will be spent now, next year and in the final year, if we remember.

The fact is that the community of Burlington needs \$14 million immediately just to upgrade its sewage facilities in order to participate more fully in the cleanup of Burlington Bay and the Hamilton harbour.

1650

The directors of both the public and separate school boards had a major comment to make in the media about their reaction to the budget. They were inspired by the throne speech, as many people were, and they looked with great anticipation and hope towards the budget document. I quote from the *Globe and Mail*: "They indicated that the purpose of a throne speech is to give people an idea of a government's intention, and by that definition the Ontario Liberals intended to do everything."

The boards of education in Halton do not necessarily share the view that the part about doing things for everyone with respect to public and separate education in Halton was achieved. The unfortunate truth is that we are still funding at a 44 per cent level for the provincial contribution in spite of a Liberal government and a previous-to-the-last-election Liberal Party policy that it would increase the funding level. It made a solid commitment to do it. It has failed to do it and this is going to have a serious impact on the residential property taxpayer in Halton, particularly in Burlington.

This is significant because the real harm in that nonfunding decision in the budget will not come to light until next February or March when the school boards are establishing their budgets and when the mill rate is being calculated and communicated to the taxpayers of Halton and in particular those of Burlington. What it means is that the true impact of that statement will probably not occur until after the next election. It is very clever, very well crafted in terms of a

position, but in no way does it honour the kinds of statements made in the throne speech in terms of the commitment to education.

In the area of health care, the minister has bypassed many communities in Ontario for assistance in improving ambulance services—some communities had greater need than the city of Burlington—and I have indicated my appreciation that we received our badly needed ambulance funding.

When one looks carefully at the health budget, one is concerned about the growing pressure—I actually have the number—on the 29,500 nursing home residents in Ontario. The throne speech made a very glowing statement about support for nursing homes and nursing home residents, but unfortunately, as the *Globe and Mail* aptly put it, it was not forthcoming in the budget. One has to question seriously the government's commitment to improving the situation in Ontario for nursing home residents when it is not providing the necessary funding to ensure that the assessed needs of those residents are being met adequately and in fact improved where necessary.

The budget gives one short statement—that is their entire commitment—to nursing homes. I am pleased to quote it into the record: "The government will provide additional funding to improve the quality of care in nursing homes." That is all that was said. The government is sitting on a bill that was introduced by the New Democratic Party, supported by the Progressive Conservative Party and then sent to the standing committee on social development for approval.

I am talking about Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act. That is a significant bill because it involves increasing the rights of nursing home residents. It provides them with a series of documented rights that must be fully respected and promoted, including the right to be treated with courtesy and respect, to be properly fed, groomed and clothed, to privacy, to receive visitors, and where possible, for married couples to live in the same room. Those were just a few of the enhancements and rights embodied in the nursing home residents' bill of rights.

The government was very reluctant to support that bill. They were very reluctant to provide any details in their throne speech and now they have been totally reluctant to provide details of those funds in the budget. What concerns me is that we are seeing a trend emerge here, a trend which the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) referred to in his speech just last week and which I am sure did not escape many members of this House.

That minister said he had been listening to whispers out there: "You can shake the hand of a Liberal before an election, but after an election he will shake your confidence." I was rather impressed with the brutal honesty of that statement coming from a minister, but in no one program do I find that statement more appropriate than the government's lack of commitment in funding the nursing home situation in Halton, in Burlington and more generally throughout Ontario.

I am disturbed that the Minister of Health has not been able to provide sufficient dollars within his budget to deal adequately with the nursing home situation. It is common knowledge that the daily rate in Ontario for privately owned and nonprofit nursing homes is \$49.16; that this rate is now almost two years old; that there has been no government action on a rate increase; that the contract that exists between operators and this provincial government has been open since January 1, and to my knowledge the province has not even responded with an offer at this point, some five and a half months later. I find that position indefensible.

I believe it is appropriate to the budget if I comment on the activities of the Health minister, who most recently was found to be involving himself in fund-raising activities from his office in the Ministry of Health. I find it somewhat unusual and perhaps even improper that he would be soliciting funds from the very people he was in the process of negotiating with, the nursing home operators of Ontario.

I am not of the legal profession, but I do have considerable background in labour negotiations, and it raises an interesting question. In Ontario today we have laws against one party making direct approaches to the other parties, or parts of parties, or groups representing the parties, during negotiation, yet the very law established by the government in labour negotiations is not applicable to their conduct with respect to soliciting funds from groups they are negotiating with. I find that quite odd.

The Deputy Speaker: You are going to tie this in with the budget?

Mr. Jackson: Yes. I think it is rather appropriate, as the minister has not provided the funds necessary to deal properly with the request of the nursing home operators for a rate increase and yet, instead of providing the funds in the budget, he is soliciting funds from the very group he is negotiating with by direct mail solicitations for donations to come out to a Liberal fund-

raising event. I think it is rather appropriate to the budget.

1700

There are many analogies that could be found, but I feel it is quite inappropriate that at this sensitive time—I have looked through this budget and I do not see where the Minister of Health has provided for Ontario hospital insurance plan fee negotiations with Ontario doctors. I am also having difficulty finding where the budget deals with the pharmacists in Ontario, who have been waiting almost a year for the minister to resolve the issue of their rates under the Ontario drug benefit plan; and the list of health care professionals and service providers in Ontario who have been held at bay by this government with respect to negotiations, is growing each month.

I asked the Treasurer if he would be able to provide more clearly defined figures in his budget, and hopefully we will be able to get on with estimates, Health estimates in particular, so we can determine what kind of real dollars this government has committed to ensure not only that the bricks and mortar of health care are addressed in this budget but also that all the people who work in our health care facilities across Ontario get equal treatment and attention.

I find it rather interesting that in Ontario today there are more people working in health care facilities than there are involved in the manufacturing of automobiles or auto parts. It is a significant sector in our service economy, yet in this budget I find the government lacking in addressing the wage and human needs of the health care providers in Ontario, whether they be nurses, doctors, pharmacists or nursing home operators.

I would like to expand some of my comments about the list of improved services that are required under Bill 176, but nowhere do I see in the budget that the government is dedicating the necessary dollars to ensure that the assessed needs of nursing home residents are met. The government's failure to deal with the memorandum that has been forwarded by the Ontario Nursing Home Association should be cause for considerable concern by all members of this House.

In closing, I want to comment briefly about a concern that has been raised in my community particularly. In my last newsletter I asked a question about the budget. I asked where my community felt the extra \$1 billion in revenue should be dedicated in the Treasurer's forthcoming budget. An unprecedented 85 per cent of the residents—and I guess some 600 residents

responded—all agreed we should be dealing with some form of legitimate deficit reduction and not the kind of sleight-of-hand deficit reduction that the Treasurer has engaged in with his figures.

I am concerned that his entire budget statement goes on to talk about all the areas he intends to spend in and then he concludes with the bottom line that he will be in a position to reduce the deficit if he does not spend on some of the things he promised in the previous pages of the budget. I find that most unusual and rather new. Mind you, as a new member, I have only been privy to two budgets while I have been in the Legislature.

I have to say two things about the deficit which concern me most. One is that the accumulated debt for Ontario is now upwards of \$38 billion. That is a figure that people have lost sight of and do not seem to be talking about. The cost of servicing that debt is \$3.8 billion. We are spending more today on servicing that debt than we are on all our social services.

I see the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) is in the House. It must be of great concern to him that we as a province are spending more on debt service than we are spending on those human needs that are his responsibility. Eleven cents of every dollar is going to that debt service.

Last year in Ontario every man, woman and child owed \$3,847. This year it has gone over \$4,000 for the first time in our history, \$4,019 under this budget, yet the Treasurer can stand in his place and advise us that he has significantly reduced the deficit and he is doing something to bring government spending under control.

That raises another point. It is absolutely unbelievable that this government preached austerity on the campaign hustings in the last election. I remember their bringing up government advertising as their greatest whipping boy. I am sure the cabinet and all members of the government party will be pleased when all the amounts of dollars spent on advertising are tabled and they realize how many more dollars they are spending on trying to look good. They have increased the civil service to approximately 3,900 more civil servants in less than two years. The previous Tory government worked hard, over a five-year period, to reduce the civil service by an almost equal amount.

That is the concern that has been expressed by the constituents of Burlington South. I do not believe they have bought the minister's comments and pronouncements that he has done something about deficit reduction. Those facts are well known. They are very well hidden

within the budget document, but the people of Burlington are quite adept at reading budgets. They are quite adept at seeing through the kind of presentation and packaging that has occurred with this budget.

There are many other areas of this budget that I would like to address. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) is present. I would like to advise him that the Treasurer can continue to give him additional dollars to spend, but it is well documented that his is one of the most under-spent of ministries.

It is interesting to note that in the last two years we have seen a wholesale shift in announcements from the Ministry of Housing. They do not talk about what they have spent. They do not talk about what they have achieved. They talk only about what they have announced. It is a very clever ploy. Again, they are not fooling the building community. They are not fooling the tenants of Ontario. They are not fooling the landlords of Ontario. They are not fooling the growing list of people who have become reliant on an improvement in their housing situation, the needs of whom are not being met; special groups such as the disabled, the disadvantaged and in particular our adolescent youth, who are having difficulty finding affordable accommodation.

The minister knows that most of his programs are undersubscribed.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We are cutting down.

Mr. Jackson: I say to the minister, they are undersubscribed. I would hope that he would be most forthcoming during estimates with respect to not only what he is producing but also why so few people in Ontario are able to take advantage of the government programs established.

All the budget does is lay out a framework for political announcements and allow the minister to develop a very strong public image that he is concerned and aware of the housing crisis in Ontario. But the time clock is running. He has been the minister now for two years, and we are not seeing the commitment to completed units. He has stood corrected in this House on a statement he made earlier, that he had produced more units in one year than the previous government. That matter has been corrected, and he will know the previous government did produce more units in a given year than anything he has accomplished.

He had the largest budget in Ontario's history with which to accomplish that. He had the largest increase in revenue in Ontario's history and he was unable to accomplish that. He had an

increase of \$8 billion and he was unable to accomplish the goals that he set for housing.

1710

I would ask the minister to reflect very carefully, not on the announcements he has made but on the accomplishments he thinks he might be able to achieve in the next year, because his record in the past two years is one of gross underspending because his programs have not caught fire. They have not been acceptable, and therefore they are not working to the extent that they should be working in Ontario.

That concludes my remarks. I appreciated the opportunity and the patience of this House in listening to the very detailed points about the impact of this budget on the great community of Burlington.

Mr. Speaker: Are there questions or comments? If not, any further debate? The member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock).

Hon. Mr. Curling: Do we not go in rotation?

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Curling: It gives me a great opportunity and it is a great pleasure for me to rise in this great House to express my unreserved support for the 1987 budget. After listening to my colleague on the other side, the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson), for one moment I thought he had great praise for the budget. He was saying what a lovely budget and the commitment we have made with regard to housing was really better than any time they have ever seen it in this House for a very long time.

There have been criticisms of this budget voiced by the opposition and the media, as we have read; criticisms suggesting that this budget somehow fails to focus on the needs of the people of Ontario; the criticism that the financial assets available should have all been devoted to eliminating the deficit rather than to addressing some of the very urgent needs we have, including the need for new schools, an increased housing supply and improved social services.

No astute observer could ever expect that the opposition would rise in the House and congratulate the government in power for its superb financial management, for its astute fiscal planning. I do not expect that. I know how difficult it is for them to do that, even though the budget is so well done. Critics they should be and critics I expect them to be. It is the opposition's job to quibble, as my dear friend in the opposition has just been quibbling, yet I submit that in the case of the 1987 Ontario budget their quibbles

were rather weak, ill-founded and verging on really just being ridiculous.

As a member of the Ontario cabinet and in my capacity as Minister of Housing, I am prepared to offer my unqualified support for the provisions of this budget. I am also, as members well know, the member for the great riding of Scarborough North, which has a population of more than 200,000 residents. The honourable member for Scarborough Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) is also one of my constituents.

Mr. Warner: That's right.

Hon. Mr. Curling: He is quite proud to know I am his member, and I serve him very well.

Mr. Warner: I didn't vote for you.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I know that 220,000 voting for me would be quite historic, but as members know, the largest vote total was received by the member for Scarborough North. So adding the vote of the dear member for Scarborough-Ellesmere, it would again—I would expect his vote the next time. I know how tough and difficult it is, when he goes to the poll, to make the decision for his party. I respect his commitment to his party, but his great leader would understand if he makes the stroke against—

Mr. Warner: You are making it easier by the moment.

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member for Scarborough North, I want to say that my support is equally enthusiastic as the Minister of Housing. I believe the provisions of this budget will bring important and long-lasting benefits to the people of my riding, and not only there but to the people of other ridings and to the people of the entire province.

It was the responsibility of this great Treasurer to take the financial resources available to him for expenditure and, carefully weighing the priorities of this government, to determine in his great wisdom the ways in which those funds could be spent to bring the greatest constructive and long-term benefits to the people of Ontario, this great province.

I submit that all the decisions he made were founded in care, compassion and determination to serve the people of Ontario to the best of his capacity. You know, Mr. Speaker, the respect he gets when he rises in this House, not only for his knowledge of the House but also for his capability and for the astute and wise manner in which he conducts himself with the budget.

We were enlightened, all of us, both by his profound sense of responsibility and his well-known sharp pencil. Those decisions will not

only support the growth and prosperity that have taken root in Ontario and are flowering more with every passing month; those decisions have laid foundations for future growth and renewal that will serve this province well in the 21st century. We are even looking forward, when the next election comes about—whether it be in six months, two years or three years—to the fact that we can run on these records.

The sheer folly of the previous government in its ad hoc responses to social needs was a case of minding the store and listening for the fire alarm. If the alarm went off, they would come running with their little bucket and put that fire out. They would just throw the water there and somehow get that blaze under control.

The strength of this government is that we are not only minding the store, but are minding it superbly: the envy of the opposition, realizing they had 42 years in which to perfect the manner in which they could conduct government. I would say that in those 42 years they did some wonderful things, but complacency set in. They took it for granted: and what happened? They ran this province down to the situation where we have to be looking at that backlog, that neglect, and addressing those concerns.

They allowed this province to erode that infrastructure for cities. If I could just reflect a bit, we saw the education system being eroded. We saw our roads needing maintenance and service. We saw the neglect of providing affordable housing for the people of Ontario.

1720

The day we walked in here, they immediately asked what we were going to do. Sometimes when we increased some of those budgetary situations, we found we could not even arrest some of the problems that had been caused by the previous government. However, we are moving in a direction to revitalize and fortify this province once more. We made a vow that Ontario would never again be caught off guard by any changing industrial base, by severe economic fluctuations or by hundreds of thousands of young people who are unprepared for an unpredicted job market.

We intend to run this province in a manner that we can leave it for those who are coming behind to have it much better. It is that simple. Like fathers and parents, we should make it easier and better for our children. We found a situation that was rather difficult for us to continue or to even make easier for our children, but we can. With the capable hands of the wonderful cabinet

ministers and the caucus that we have, there is still hope.

In my ministry, the Ministry of Housing, we have been compelled to spend much of the past two years racing to rectify the unanswered needs of tenants, landlords, roomers, boarders, lodgers and the homeless—I am glad that my honourable colleague the member for Burlington South has returned; he always listens so attentively—needs that had been allowed to accumulate, to fester and to grow, without any concrete government response.

We saw interest groups warring against each other. We can all recall—it was a long time ago—in 1985 when, just to put the supplies back in order, we had to get those advocacy groups together to make the climate better for us to operate. Landlords were warring, tenants were fighting; that was the manipulative manner of certain governments in the past, using tenants against landlords. It was quite a task but, with the faith we have in people, we brought them together.

Now we are not only addressing the present housing needs because we have put the environment back in order—needs that exist in the present housing market—but also preparing for the needs that will arise five, 10 and 20 years down the road. That is the strategy for this entire government, to run this government like a responsible corporation, to plan for the future and to ensure the resources will be in place to meet the needs of those who inherit the social legacy the government leaves behind.

Let us look at the provision that this budget has made for housing. Before I do that—

Mr. Wiseman: You lost your page.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am all right.

Mr. Wiseman: Help him find his page.

Hon. Mr. Curling: As I said, in December 1985 I announced an assured housing policy strategy. We all recall it. Mr. Speaker, I remember you sitting there listening very attentively; not only you but also all the members of this government and opposition. As I recall your expression and the expression of the members here, it was the first time that a comprehensive housing policy had been announced in this House. I myself was rather shocked that it was the first time. No one felt the previous government had addressed the issue in a comprehensive way; as I mentioned earlier on, just in an ad hoc manner: if a couple of groups came by, they would deal with that specific interest or specific case, and then that was the policy.

The housing policy of my other colleagues over the way in the New Democratic Party was quite precise and limited. It said: "Four per cent. That is all we want. Four per cent control on any increase in rents. That is our housing policy." What we did was we listened and we agreed as a government that, yes, there should be some type of review and control. We acknowledged that and we put that in place in 1985-86.

We went further and put a guideline in place that is sensitive to inflation, so that we need not have to come back every time to the people and put them against each other or play games against each interest group. We made a permanent kind of a guideline that is sensitive to inflation. That is what we have done. We have brought about a comprehensive housing policy. Under that policy, we brought protection to 260,000 tenants living in post-1975 buildings who were never protected in the past.

That assured housing policy is just the foundation of the structure that is needed to meet the needs of the people of this province. Let me give an example of what assured housing has meant to every region of this province. I did not say this. It is written, if you will bear with me a bit, Mr. Speaker, in the May 2 editorial in the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal:

"Thunder Bay has always been a tough town in which to find low-cost housing, but the housing situation for people on the bottom end of the income ladder should start to change for the better, thanks"—and this is a direct quote—"to the renewed commitment to social and public assisted housing by the Ontario government."

I am speaking about the north, when they stand here and ask what we have done for the north. This Minister of Housing is not the Minister of Housing for Toronto, he is the Minister of Housing for Ontario and Thunder Bay.

It continues and it gets better: "The housing allocations for Ontario have quadrupled. In Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario, they have more than quadrupled. Everything was initiated"—and I did not say this—"by the minister, Alvin Curling, in his December 1985 announcement of the assured housing strategy."

This is the line I like, it is so true: "It was a conscious change in government policy."

"From an average of 100 new units a year, social housing allocations for the region have jumped to 704 for 1986 and 1987. Before 1985, allocations for the whole province were around 1,500 to 1,600 units a year. In January 1986"—the member for Burlington South should listen to

this—"it went up to 6,700 a year provincially, with another 6,700 units for 1987."

That is what assured housing did for Thunder Bay. That tells members what assured housing is doing for the communities across Ontario.

1730

The other day, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) stated that in 1982 the previous government had 16,000 rental units completed and that in 1986 the rental units completed were 11,000, saying it was because of our government that it dropped. He deliberately did not state anything about 1983, 1984 and 1985, which were very dismal efforts on their part.

He did not say why it dropped in 1986—it was because of poor funding by that government when it was in power in 1984 and 1985—but somehow gave the impression to the public that it was because of this government that it had dropped that low. He did not say we had committed ourselves to allocations for 6,700 in 1986 and 6,700 units in 1987.

Mr. Philip: What is the vacancy rate now?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will get to that, if the member wants to talk about the vacancy rate. Let us look at the provisions this government has made for housing.

Mr. Philip: I can hardly wait.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member likes this stuff.

This budget provides \$220 million in capital support for the construction of more affordable rental housing and an additional \$50 million annually to support the operating costs of new housing stock. This budget provides for a total expenditure of \$378 million on housing in Ontario this year, an increase of more than 34 per cent over last year.

No one can stand in this House and criticize those efforts. Of course, one could say it is not enough to address the needs, and I fully agree. It is not enough to address a need neglected over years.

I want to address the impact this budget will have on the people of my own riding. This gives me that opportunity, and I do not get the opportunity many times to speak, but to answer questions that—

Mr. Jackson: How did you do on your questions on the hot earth in your riding?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Very well. The honourable member mentions the radioactive soil at McClure Crescent in Malvern. It was on June 26, 1985, that we became the government of this province, and on October 15, 1985, we made an

offer to those people at McClure Crescent who had no place to go, no one to address their cause and no one to listen.

When I took that issue to my colleagues in cabinet, we made a commitment and followed through on the commitment of offering to buy 40 of those homes at market price.

Mr. Jackson: What about the 60 tenants?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I just want to address the honourable member's question. Sometimes question period does not give us the opportunity to go into details, and I want to make sure the member gets it right this time.

We commissioned three appraisals to value that property, one coming from the Ministry of Government Services, one from the residents themselves and one from the Ministry of Housing. We paid for all three appraisals. We paid for the transportation costs wherever these residents resettled.

We went further. We told the residents there that they need not move in a hurry; they can take their time to decide. We are also further committed to move that soil, and they can make up their mind if they want to take that offer one year after we have moved that soil, so there is no hurry on their part.

In response to what we have done with some of that housing, we have further rented those houses out. We have explained to the tenants that we are still convinced, from scientific information and advice we have gotten, it is safe to live there. It is their decision if they would like to move and when they would like to move.

Why did we buy it? Because we are a responsive government, a listening and compassionate government, giving them an option, to say to them they are not trapped in that situation, which the Conservatives, when they were there as a government, did nothing about. As I said today in the House, when we made that decision, the highly and most honourably respected previous member there, Tom Wells, commended me. He called me and said: "I am so happy that you could have done something for those people. I tried for years with my colleagues. They would not listen."

That is what the situation is there today. It has been resolved.

I said earlier that the critics in this House said this budget lacked focus. I have no hesitation in asking this House to focus its attention on the people of Scarborough North—those wonderful people there—because my riding, in so many ways, is the new face of urban Ontario and urban Canada.

It is a riding of families, a riding of parents who are prepared to do everything possible to ensure that their children receive the best possible education.

It is a riding of senior citizens, a riding of individuals who helped to build modern Ontario, who settled in the communities and raised their families and established a remarkable network of churches and volunteer organizations; people who deserve to live now in comfort and security.

It is a riding of people who were born in 100 different nations, new citizens who wanted so much to be Canadian citizens that they struggled and worked and sacrificed for years to become part of our city, part of our province, part of our great country, Canada. It is a riding of ambitious entrepreneurs and hardworking business people.

It is also a riding of individuals who need practical and focused assistance to reach their full potential: the physically and the psychiatrically handicapped, the unemployed and the homeless.

It is the human face of all that Ontario is and all that Ontario will become: an energetic, burgeoning riding, alive with 100 different cultures and vitality that is magnificent to observe.

It is important that I say this, because when we make a budget we must reflect the people and their energies and their potential.

For almost 10 years now, the children of Scarborough North have been in urgent need of more schools and increased classroom spaces in existing schools. I have visited many in the portables, and I have seen angry parents and angry teachers.

I am a product of 14 years in a community college, working there in portables. Community colleges were a great idea, a tremendous idea, of the former government, but as usual its consistency waned and it could not carry it on. I saw where portables were attached to portables, rat-infested and cold portables, for students to spend most of their school life in. I visited the elementary schools, the grade schools; and they are not adequate. We should not be doing this to our pupils.

1740

They see me as the one to address those problems and I will, but I want to say we inherited a legacy of neglect that will take more than a year to correct. I am proud that my honourable colleague the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) has shown an increase in budget to address those problems. It is not enough. Just yesterday, I was at the opening of a school, the Divine Infant Roman Catholic School. They were so happy that we acted to give them a school

in the fastest-growing community of Scarborough North. As I said, 200,000 was the statistic in 1981. I am quite sure it is more now.

I am saying that this budget has addressed many of the problems but it has not completely solved all the problems. In Scarborough, these problems have been characterized by portables stretching as far as the eye could see, staggered classes and children being bused miles from their homes to schools, children having their lunches in the corridors and at times parents having to come to monitor their lunches because there was no place for the children to go.

This budget provides \$26 million in capital funds for new school construction in Scarborough, the largest funding allocation for any city in the Metro Toronto area. I am very happy and proud the Minister of Education has addressed that. It is not enough and I will be at him again to make sure Scarborough North is not neglected. I do not think I have to be at him too hard. He understands the problem.

This budget will mean a new separate secondary school, Mother Teresa, and two new separate elementary schools in Scarborough, as well as two new public elementary schools and an addition to Lester B. Pearson Collegiate Institute to accommodate 400 more pupils.

The need is not yet met but this budget is proof that the Ministry of Education is committed to meeting the educational needs not only of Scarborough but also of children and young people across Ontario. I defy the opposition to prove these funds are not needed because we know they will be well spent.

Let us look at skills training. Under our Futures program, in less than two years, 50,000 young people have been helped to upgrade their education and work skills. The great majority now are successfully employed. This budget acknowledges the outstanding success of this program and gives it the expanded support it deserves. I defy the opposition to criticize a program that has finally brought concrete solutions to a problem that has been troubling Ontario for close to a decade.

I mentioned earlier the college I was at, Seneca College. Let us look at colleges and universities. We know that our once-proud post-secondary system had by 1985 been allowed to deteriorate to a point where there were not even enough funds for decent maintenance—I was there and I saw it and lived it—let alone for the all-important investments in research and faculty that were needed. Any university administrator in this province will tell members that this government

has done more to revitalize our universities and colleges than has been done in the past 10 years. They should be ashamed of themselves over there.

I further defy the opposition to say that this budget's provision to sustain that support is money ill spent. I say to the member for Burlington South that his leader got up and said: "There is so much money in the coffers. Why do we not hand it out?" How irresponsible from a former Minister of Revenue.

Let us look at the additional \$26-million provision for child care this year, raising our commitment to \$185 million in total. The members heard my honourable colleague's announcement today. The opposition itself has raised the case of parents unable to work because of inadequate care for their children. We have no more important responsibility than our responsibility to the care and nurture of our children. This is truly money well spent.

Our senior citizens: This budget provides increased tax grants for seniors. It provides significant funds to maintain and upgrade municipal and charitable homes for the aged. It provides increased funds for all the services that enable senior citizens to remain independent, to live comfortable lives in familiar surroundings.

We are quite sensitive, of course, to our community. I went to great pains to describe Scarborough North. I think my government went to great pains to address all Ontarians, whether young, senior citizens, disabled, etc. We were quite sensitive to that. Are these services the opposition believes are not necessary? Are these people the opposition would prefer we ignore? The answer is a resounding no.

Let us look at the physically disabled. This budget addresses their needs in meaningful ways. I would like to add that this government has done more to support the needs of the disabled than the previous government ever considered doing, including provisions to Ontario's building code that provide the greatest access to both public and private buildings for the disabled of any province in Canada.

Would the opposition prefer we withdraw these supports?

Let us look at the extension of Ontario health insurance plan assistance to 40,000 needy families. It assured medical care, a service the opposition thinks is not necessary. Shame on them.

These are all programs that will touch and improve the lives of the people in the riding of Scarborough North. I defend their absolute right

to the benefits they will gain from these programs. They are all programs that will enhance the lives of people across this province.

1750

I have just touched on some of the highlights of this budget. I would like to conclude by affirming my belief that this budget is, in the most important ways, a fiscal reflection of the vision that our government has for Ontario. We envisage and we are determined to achieve a province in which energy, ambition and aspiration are encouraged to flourish, because it is those sources of growth and development that form the bedrock of economic stability. At the same time, we envisage and we are determined to achieve a province in which no child goes uncared for, unfed or uneducated, a province in which no adult goes without shelter or whatever form of support is necessary to make his or her life one of dignity and comfort.

Before I sit down, I would like to make an observation. For some time, I have heard criticism from the opposition about staffing. Each day they rise in their seats and criticize the growing bureaucracy. On the other hand, they encourage and ask for more programs. I ask the opposition, who will do the work if there is no staff to carry out the work? We have seen, even in my ministry, that staffing is very necessary.

I have seen here the same bureaucracy that served that government so well being criticized so badly. I want to say we have some of the best bureaucrats I have seen in this world. They are dedicated and they are committed to their task. I ask members of this House, when they rise for questions, to have a bit more respect for those dedicated civil servants because, in my two years as minister, I have seen their commitment.

As a new member, in two years I have learned a lot and I have seen a lot. I am charged with representing the people of Scarborough North—and to work for a group of people like the Liberal Party of this government of Ontario. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I am looking forward to representing them for a long time.

Mr. Jackson: I apologize for my interjections but I could not contain myself when the minister made a statement that he was running his ministry like a responsible corporation. That is absolutely too much to swallow for anybody in this House or anybody outside this House. He is sitting on a ministry that was allocated \$251 million in 1985-86 and he spent \$226 million. He underspent by \$25 million.

I will tell him the report card on his performance. His own Treasurer in his budget

said, "the Ontario housing industry has returned to its full strength. However, the problem of providing enough low-cost rental accommodation continues to be a major challenge."

We know what the Treasurer thinks. So what does he do? He gives the minister a bunch more money the following year. He is given \$349 million and he spends \$282 million. He has underspent by \$67 million. All the minister does is make announcements, but the one element of his ministry that he is given all free reign to provide to work in is his rent control program.

When this government left office, we were spending \$7 million on rent control administration. In the estimates the minister tabled last week, he is going to be spending \$25 million. That is a 220 per cent increase in government bureaucracy. If he is going to stand in his place and tell the citizens of Ontario that the opposition should respect his ability, he should phone them and talk to them. They are using words like "nightmare," or "the worst paper bureaucracy" they have ever seen, or "three-year backlogs." I respect their comments. That is why I raised the questions in the House. If the minister checks with Hansard, he will realize that three quarters of all the statements I have raised in this Legislature have come directly from his own staff.

The minister says he is moving forward with roomers and boarders. It took the New Democratic Party and the Progressive Conservative Party to bring forward Bill 10 and Bill 59. He has been sitting on the roomers' and boarders' legislation since March and there has been no legislation forthcoming.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

Mr. Mancini: I would just like to make a couple of comments and also take this opportunity to congratulate my colleague on the fine job he has done as Minister of Housing.

The member for Burlington South has been highly critical. In many ways, he has in fact contradicted some of the things that he and his party have said. For example, they have criticized the government for hiring new employees in the Ministry of Correctional Services, psychiatric hospitals and the health and safety area. They have tried to criticize the government for that; in fact, they had. Yet, today we see the honourable member getting up and shouting at the minister that we need more people to work in his branch of government. They are very inconsistent. They want us to fire the people who

work in Correctional Services one day and then they want us to hire more people the next.

I want to tell the member for Burlington South something. When we took over as government, the rent review process was a disaster, a shambles. We had no housing program whatsoever in this province. The tenants who lived in buildings that were constructed after 1976 had no protection whatsoever. Our Minister of Housing put forward legislation that was supported by this party and ultimately by the whole chamber, and that gave protection to those thousands and thousands of tenants to whom the Conservative Party never wanted to afford any type of protection. That is what we saw from the previous government. Major pieces of legislation were passed through this House in carriage by the honourable minister. I am glad to say that I am his colleague and I am proud of the work that he has done over the last 22 months.

Mr. Speaker: Any other questions or comments? Does the minister have any windup comments?

Hon. Mr. Curling: No.

Mr. Speaker: This may be the appropriate time for someone to adjourn the debate.

On motion by Mr. Pollock, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, June 8, we will deal with committee of the whole House on Bill 34, freedom of information.

On Tuesday, June 9, we may continue with committee of the whole House on Bill 34 and begin committee of the whole House on Bill 154, pay equity. Any divisions will be deferred to 5:45 p.m. every day that Bill 154 is considered.

On Wednesday, June 10, we will have third reading of Bill 78, mental health, and resume committee of the whole House on Bill 154. On Thursday, June 11, in the morning we will have private members' business standing in the names of the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) and the member for Leeds (Mr. Runciman).

On Thursday afternoon, we will again deal with the committee of the whole House on Bill 154, followed by second reading of Bill 77, the Beef Cattle Marketing Amendment Act, and the resumption of the debate on the budget.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, June 8, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, June 8, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WATER LEVELS

Mr. Harris: The small community of Field in my riding was virtually wiped out by a major flood in the spring of 1979. Business operations suffered; some shut down. Tourist camps and docking facilities were ripped apart and washed away. Major employers such as Field Lumber, Goulard Lumber and MacMillan Bloedel were ravaged by the Sturgeon River and closed down for weeks.

When it was over, our communities rallied together, and with the help of Queen's Park, communities were rebuilt. An advisory committee was set up; there were studies and more studies and extensive public input. A special monitoring service was established and projects that would alleviate future flooding threats were identified.

By 1985, most of the work was complete but, most important, a single watershed control body was still being negotiated with the federal government. In 1985, I directed that it receive top priority. Since this minister has taken office this has been stalled, and we are no further ahead on the single control body concept.

In 1985, water levels were again too high; this year they are too low. Tourism and property owners are once again suffering. When is the minister going to start moving again on this issue which is crucial to all those communities on Lake Nipissing?

In addition, last year, the advisory committee recommended remedial work on the Sturgeon River below the hydro dam to reduce flooding at the mill. MacMillan Bloedel offered to pay up to 50 per cent of the cost. An urgent request was sent to the government last year. There was no answer last year, no answer this winter, no answer this spring. When is the minister going to have the courtesy to respond to this request—

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Harris: —to help solve a problem which threatens a major industry, not only in my riding but also between Sudbury and—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: A \$330-million loss reported for 1986 by the auto insurers can indicate a grave situation for motorists in this province. Of course, there is no verification that the figure is correct and it very likely will prove not to be. We know that the figure of 99.1 cents reputedly paid out of every premium dollar for claims is false. Included in those claims figures are the insurance companies' expenses for adjusting claims. The motorists do not get back anything like 99 cents on the dollar in claims payments, and that is deliberate misrepresentation by the insurance companies.

However, if the loss reported is anywhere near correct, then the private insurance system of the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) in this province is totally out of control. It means insurance rates in Ontario for the private system have increased by 65 per cent in the last five years, with the insurers claiming to have lost hundreds of millions of dollars. By comparison, rates under the driver-owned public plans in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia have increased by an average of only 11 per cent or one sixth as much, and they have all made a net profit in those five years. What a contrast.

How silly and unresponsive can the Minister of Financial Institutions be? Can he not see that his insurance system here has broken down? His patchwork measures will not solve it. In fact, they are going to make it worse. Simply, his stubborn refusal to implement a public automobile insurance plan like those in the western provinces is nothing but blind subservience to the private insurance companies at the massive expense of the motorists.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Lupusella: On June 5, 1987, the Toronto Star reported that I failed to appear before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal for an injured worker whom I was supposed to represent. Let me clearly state that prior to my decision not to represent my constituent, I had no discussion with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye).

Let me also clarify that the appeal hearing had only an indirect relationship on the outcome of my constituent's case. With Bill 101, my constituent had won the appeal before an independent appeal tribunal. Under Bill 101, the board of directors has the discretionary power to appeal that decision. With regard to my constituent's case, the board decided to exercise this power and also to review the policies behind decision 72, which indirectly affects my constituent.

In view of this indirect relationship between the policies and the general principle of the law contained in decision 72, I decided not to represent the case personally but to send a letter to the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board to be used as an exhibit at the hearing. I explained my feelings regarding the independence of the appeals tribunal and the board of directors, which has the power to set policies. I also stated that I believed the merits of the case should prevail on an individual basis rather than establishing a precedent.

Last, the son-in-law of the injured worker was aware of my decision as well.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. Ashe: What you see is not what you get with the government of David Peterson. The Premier (Mr. Peterson), who so likes to be seen at all the black-tie functions around town, who fancies himself one of the intelligentsia, is the same David Peterson who has inflicted such draconian budget cuts on poor Lily and the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

This is the same David Peterson who refuses to let legitimate bookstores open on Sunday in spite of his promises to do so; who instead sends the police to harass small businessmen who only seek to remain open when the purveyors of all sorts of other questionable materials remain free to sell their wares on Yonge Street.

The word is out. Will the real David Peterson please stand up?

In the gallery today will be representatives of a distinguished group who support the legitimate requests of the booksellers. This group includes, among others, Jane Jacobs, author; Margaret Atwood, author; Joyce Wieland, artist; William Kilbourn, historian; Peter Herrndorf, publisher of *Toronto Life*; Walter Moos, art dealer; Av Isaacs, art dealer; and there are many more.

When will the real David Peterson please stand up?

Mr. Speaker: I might just remind all members that it is appropriate to refer to other members by their ministry or by their riding.

1340

BOUNDARIES ACT DECISION

Mr. Wildman: I rise to bring to the attention of the House the long, ongoing case concerning my constituent Donald Nelson of Sault Ste. Marie, who owns property on St. Joseph Island in my riding. Mr. Nelson lost property basically as a result of the Boundaries Act hearings held on March 21, 1984, and June 13 and 14, 1984, in Sault Ste. Marie by James Gardiner.

Since that time, Mr. Nelson has been attempting to get the government to review the decision of Mr. Gardiner, and he also has had the Ombudsman look into it. He has argued for many months now that the government should review the tapes of the hearings. He now has found that the government argues it did review the matter, but in fact neither the Ministry of the Attorney General nor the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations bothered to review the tapes.

How on earth could they review the case if they have not listened to the proceedings of the hearing? Mr. Nelson feels he has not been dealt with fairly and feels most aggrieved. I hope the ministers responsible will look into the matter and assure Mr. Nelson that all his rights have been protected.

KING EDWARD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I am pleased that the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is in the House, because I am speaking in part about his most ambitious \$226-million capital expansion program. I am proud to inform the House of the 100th birthday of a school in Kitchener and the continued good use of this excellent capital equipment.

King Edward public school was built in 1887 at a cost of \$3,700. King Edward school had its name changed in 1905 in honour of King Edward VII. The structure of course has been renovated and today a wing built in 1921 is one of the most distinguished pieces of architecture of which I am aware. Thousands of Ontarians have spent their formative years there. The school presently has 225 students from the core of downtown Kitchener during the day. It is filled with community activities at night and heritage language students on Saturday.

I salute the principal, Jim Moses, the staff, the students and former students and the excellent work of the anniversary planning committee made up of Sandra Chris, Barbara Hull, Randy Sangster and Thelma Van Camp. May King

Edward public school continue to serve us indefinitely and well.

GREAT LAKES FOREST PRODUCTS

Mr. Hennessy: I rise in the House to comment on this government's actions regarding the closure of the Great Lakes Forest Products waferboard plant in Thunder Bay last May.

On April 29, 1986, I wrote to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), asking him to intercede in this management-labour problem at the Great Lakes plant. I asked the Premier to meet with the United Paperworkers International Union and the Great Lakes company to try to resolve the situation that existed at that time.

At that time, I suggested a moratorium would be the solution to give both parties the opportunity of evaluating the future of this plant. I understand the Premier met with the parties and discussions were undertaken. The plant shut down anyway on May 1, 1986, throwing possibly 150 people out of work. Subsequently, the then Minister of Northern Development and Mines, the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), announced that on May 13—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member's time has expired.

Mr. Hennessy: I am very, very sorry the Premier did not do something about it.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Hon. Mr. Conway: For some time now, we in Ontario have recognized the importance of linguistic diversity beyond Canada's two official languages. To enhance the lives of as many of our citizens as possible, the Ontario government decided some 10 years ago to begin funding heritage language instruction in elementary schools.

The growth of this heritage language program over the years has demonstrated how very important heritage language programming is to the people of Ontario. Currently, there are some 72 school boards offering more than 4,000 classes in 58 heritage languages to more than 90,000 young people.

These programs enhance the students' understanding of themselves and their linguistic and cultural background, help and encourage all students to develop their skills in using language and prepare these students for life in our multicultural society.

Approximately \$11.5 million a year is currently provided by the Ontario government to school boards to fund heritage language instruction.

Boards have responded by scheduling classes in a variety of ways to best meet their local needs.

There have been over the years a number of private members' bills regarding heritage language programming introduced into this Legislature, the most recent of these being Bill 80. Insofar as that bill reinforces the educational and social value of the current heritage languages program it is supported in principle by the Ontario government. However, there is concern that some aspects of that proposed legislation, Bill 80, could fragment the goals and the resources we have for education in Ontario today.

My ministry recognizes that improvements need to be made to the current policy for heritage language instruction to address some of the concerns associated with its operation and to provide additional resources for its enhancement and future development. Therefore, I am pleased to announce today a proposal for action relative to the heritage languages program. In developing this particular proposal we have tried to be sensitive to our multicultural tradition and to be concerned about providing the best educational opportunities for all our children. Our proposal involves five initiatives which I would now like to outline.

First, this initiative announced today would require a school board to provide, or to purchase from another board, instruction in a particular heritage language if parents of 25 pupils make a request of that board. Instruction would be provided after school, on nonschool days, or during an extended school day. Such an initiative reflects our commitment to educational equity for all students and helps meet the concerns of those parents who want heritage language instruction in their community.

The second initiative states that an incentive fund would be available to support training opportunities for staff currently involved in heritage language programming. This fund would be provided over three years and would recognize the central role instruction plays in providing appropriate learning opportunities for our young people. Special consideration would be given to proposals that reflect the collaboration of school boards with other boards, organizations and ethnocultural groups.

The third initiative calls for the production of a program guide to help school boards and their staff plan and provide sound heritage language instruction. Up to now, many instructors have had little access to program resource materials designed to reflect the Ontario setting for

heritage language instruction. This program guide would address that issue. In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Education will encourage widespread awareness and sharing of program resource materials produced by school boards, ethnocultural organizations and other agencies.

The fourth initiative would make available an incentive fund to support production of new student learning materials, including print, non-print and software formats, that would meet provincial criteria established for our heritage languages program.

Finally, the fifth initiative involves support for research studies of the sharing of information about good practices in heritage language instruction. My ministry believes that such an information base would provide a useful resource to the further implementation of quality programs throughout Ontario.

I am releasing a discussion paper, copies of which have been distributed today, that provides more details on these initiatives. I invite response, comments and suggestions to this initiative by September 30, 1987. We believe this paper and the responses to it will provide a sound basis for government legislation to enhance our heritage languages programs in a way that makes them relevant and sensitive to all citizens in Ontario today.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN THE WORK PLACE

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Later today I will be introducing for first reading a bill to provide both workers and communities with explicit rights to know about hazardous materials and physical agents in Ontario's work places. The legislation is designed to make our province part of the new national work place hazardous materials information system, or WHMIS. The establishment of WHMIS was agreed to by provincial and federal ministers last December.

1350

Today's bill, like its predecessor, Bill 101, which died on the order paper last February, involves four components designed to fulfil the right to know. First, the bill requires each work place to establish and maintain an inventory of all hazardous chemical and biological materials. The inventory must be prepared in consultation with the joint health and safety committee or the worker health and safety representative and it must include all hazards, both brought into the work place and generated there.

Second, the bill stipulates that each container holding a hazardous material in a work place

must be identified with warning labels that can be understood easily.

Third, the bill requires the creation, maintenance and updating of a material safety data sheet for each hazardous material in the work place.

Finally, the bill requires employers to provide workers with instruction and training and to develop the relevant courses in consultation with workers.

This legislation also allows for an exemption from the requirement to make known the identity of a material if such information is judged to be a trade secret. There will still be an obligation to provide information on any hazard that is present. The bill provides for waiving of confidential requirements in a medical emergency.

Ontario has played a leading role in the creation of the WHMIS consensus. Indeed, agreement in principle was first reached at a meeting of ministers convened in Hamilton at Ontario's initiative last September. Final agreement was reached at the meeting of ministers in Toronto last December. It was also arranged at this province's initiative.

From the outset, it has been Ontario's intention to build on the national worker-right-to-know base that WHMIS is creating. This legislation does just that and goes beyond the provisions of WHMIS in three important respects. First, it covers not only chemical and biological materials but also physical agents such as laser generators. Second, it requires the creation and maintenance of inventories. Third, it provides for the community's right to know about materials in local work places that could be hazardous to the neighbourhood and beyond. This feature is unique in our country.

As honourable members examine today's bill, they will note it provides for detail in the Ontario right-to-know system to be defined by regulation. This change from Bill 101 has been necessary because WHMIS will be created at the federal level through amendments to the Hazardous Products Act. Those amendments will provide for the detail of the national system to be set out in regulation rather than in the statute itself.

I want to emphasize that WHMIS has been developed collaboratively among labour, management and government over the past five years. We must sustain the consensus that we have built and we intend to do that through a continuous ongoing review of the system.

Last December 16 I told this House that workers would soon have the right by law to clear

and contemporary information on potential work place hazards and that such information would play an important part in the continuing effort to prevent work place illness and injury.

We move an important step closer today. I look forward to prompt consideration and speedy passage of this important measure.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Hon. Ms. Munro: I am pleased to inform the House that this afternoon I will be attending the official opening of the Toronto Pilot Interpreter Access Centre.

The centre, which is part of my ministry's initiative against wife assault, is the last of three pilot centres to open. The other two are in Thunder Bay and Niagara region. Both opened in May.

Being pilot projects, each centre operates slightly differently. The Thunder Bay centre is located in the offices of the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, the Niagara region centre is located in the community information centre in Niagara Falls and the Toronto centre is located in the Barbara Schlifer Commemorative Clinic.

The Thunder Bay and Niagara region centres will be used by service organizations which work with victims of wife assault. In Toronto, the access centre will be used by women's shelters.

The languages offered also differ and are dependent on the area's demographics.

The interpreters are fully trained not only as cultural interpreters but also to specifically work with the police, hospitals and legal aid in assisting victims of wife assault.

My ministry has produced audio-visual material for the program. There is a video for use as a training tool in the interpreter training program and a slide and tape show to help immigrant women understand the issues of the wife assault program.

In addition, intercultural communication training programs for human service workers dealing with victims of wife assault are now under way. This will help the workers to provide culturally sensitive service to their clients.

As members know, my ministry's programs are part of an 11-ministry initiative. Wife battering is a criminal offence that affects all socioeconomic, racial and religious groups. I am very pleased that through the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture immigrant victims of wife assault will have easier access to the services available to them.

EMPLOYMENT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Hon. Mr. Scott: I am sure that members of the House will recall my statement earlier this year concerning the serious difficulties many persons living in Ontario who have received training in other countries have had in obtaining the right to practise their profession or trade in the province.

In order to deal with this pressing issue, initially raised by many groups, including the visible minority women of the province, the cabinet committee on race relations established a two-phase process. The first phase consisted of a preliminary analysis of the impact on minorities of the various entry requirements for professions and trades. This analysis was completed by the consulting firm of Abt Associates. The consultants identified a number of entry requirements which may have an adverse impact on racial and ethnic minorities, including the evaluation and acceptance of foreign credentials, language requirements, lack of credit for foreign experience and, possibly, culturally biased testing procedures. I am pleased to table that large report today.

Now that we have confirmation of the concerns which have been raised, most particularly by members of minority groups, we are anxious to turn our minds to finding some solutions.

Accordingly, phase 2 of this important endeavour will consist of a review of the process by which one becomes entitled to practise a profession in Ontario. Requirements will be carefully assessed to determine whether, in an obvious or hidden way, they disadvantage persons with training from outside Canada. If a requirement does cause disadvantage, which is yet to be determined, it will then be examined to determine whether it can be eliminated or modified in order to minimize its impact without sacrificing necessary professional or trade standards.

Thus, we are appointing a three-person task force to conduct the review.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Scott: Honourable members will want to hear this.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The task force will be given sufficient resources to permit it to hire a director of research and a variety of researchers and consultants. Representatives of the professions and trades will, of course, be invited to work closely with the task force and its staff.

We hope the result of the work will be a series of concrete recommendations in relation to the rules and practices governing certifications in the dozen or so professions and trades. The task force will make recommendations concerning the elimination or modification of those requirements which cannot be justified as necessary to ensure the protection of the public. The task force will also make recommendations concerning ways in which foreign qualified persons can be helped to overcome those barriers which can be justified.

The members of the task force will be announced in the near future; I hope next week. It will be organized and staffed over the summer and will be operational by September 1. Its final report is due 12 months later.

I know all members of the House will want to support this important initiative and co-operate with the task force in so far as possible, so that members of these groups can obtain clear recommendations as to how professional or trade qualifications should actually be altered.

LOW-ALCOHOL PRODUCTS

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: In August 1986 I announced that my ministry, in conjunction with the Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Research Foundation, would be conducting a survey to determine how often very low alcohol beverages are consumed by children and what problems, if any, this may cause.

I am pleased to report to my honourable colleagues that we have completed our study and, as a result, I am planning to lower the amount of alcohol allowed in these products to 0.5 per cent from the current level of one per cent.

While the survey shows consumption of these drinks by children is a relatively minor problem, when we are dealing with young people we must be more than just cautious. Under the circumstances, reducing the maximum allowable content in unregulated products is, in my view, a prudent and reasonable response.

According to the addiction research foundation, the new 0.5 per cent limit would not be expected to produce intoxicating effects in young children.

To avoid causing undue financial hardship, we will permit distributors and store operators to phase out existing stocks until September 30 of this year, after which the new maximum alcohol content for these beverages will become effective. Results of the survey are being released today and copies will be made available to all

members. In reviewing the study, I am certain the members will find our action most reasonable.

1400

RESPONSES

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Ms. Fish: I rise to respond to the extraordinary statement given today by the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), a statement on the heritage languages program, the bulk of which indicates that there is a discussion paper the minister has issued requesting responses by September 30; a discussion paper with responses by September 30, in the face of a private member's bill on heritage languages scheduled to begin deputations and hearings this very Thursday, with groups and individuals across this province coming to this Legislature to comment on a number of the items in that bill, several of which have been touched upon here in this paper.

The issue of the government's position on heritage languages has been asked repeatedly and there has been no reply. Specific questions given as to whether government papers would be available to be rolled into the hearing process were asked and no reply was given. What, then, do we have?

We have a series of initiatives that appear to amend the bill, talking about training for personnel, curriculum resource material, student materials and a study of the effectiveness of heritage languages. These are fine initiatives indeed, mentioned by the members of this party in the course of initial debate around the bill, but a series of unanswered questions surely ought to be responded to before the committee when members of the public and parents come forward to deal with the subject.

Questions like minimum size, minimum groups of 25 across a board, must they be in the same school and how will it be handled in large centres that have populations of hundreds of thousands of students. What will the funding be? Will the responsibility rest upon the local board or will the requirement for heritage languages involve increased provincial subsidy and funds? How will the decision be made on providing heritage languages: to extend a day, to provide it after school or to provide it on the weekend? If a day is extended, how then will the remaining students be dealt with?

These questions are the very questions that hearings will begin to address on Thursday, yet this minister in this government, having repeatedly indicated that a paper was forthcoming for

months, could not manage to get the government's position out until three days before hearings are scheduled on another piece of legislation and invite the people to simply respond by September 30. I think that is a perfect disgrace and insult to the legislative procedure that has established public hearings to proceed on one bill.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms. Fish: While I speak of insults, I might turn my attention to the statement by the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) on a proposed pilot centre for interpreter access.

It would have been helpful if the minister had been kind enough to indicate the languages that would be addressed, the number to telephone, the hours of operation and the other critical things that were identified two years ago as necessary and fundamental for any adequate wife assault and wife battering programs when we deal with immigrants in this city.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN THE WORK PLACE

Mr. Gordon: We welcome the legislation that is being brought in by the government to see that hazardous goods are properly labelled, but I am little concerned that the minister is going to wait until the medical officer of health or the fire department gets in touch with him. It would seem to me the bill should be more proactive than that, and that would be one of the positive suggestions we would bring forward.

As well, in the bill the minister is talking about making sure the community has a right to know. It is one thing to say the community has a right to know what is at a particular factory, but it is another thing to make sure the community really does know. I would hope the minister would look at the bill from the point of view of amending it to see that the community is informed as to the kinds of hazardous chemicals that are stored or used at plants within urban areas.

As well, the workers in this province are going to be quite pleased to know that at last they are going to be instructed as to the kinds of chemicals they are working with and handling and, of course, we must make sure that the employers too provide adequate instruction.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Nipissing for 20 seconds.

LOW-ALCOHOL PRODUCTS

Mr. Harris: Over a year ago the member from Peterborough (Mr. Turner) brought up the issue

of Sarasoda and the one per cent alcohol content in beverages aimed specifically at young children. Over a year ago. Now kids, after a long day at school, will be able to have two instead of one before they ride their bikes home. This is a solution from this minister; it is a half-baked solution—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member's time has expired.

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Mr. Grande: The statement that was given a few minutes ago by the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), plus the so-called white paper proposal for action that he issued, has to be the most disappointing piece of work that has been done in the last year and a half on this issue by this government.

I cannot believe that the Minister of Education would utter these words today in this document when the very same member for 12 years prior to today supported the principle of the heritage language program during school hours. Not one word was mentioned in this document that supposedly took one and a half years to prepare. This is the most incredible piece of work.

The Council of Ontario Communities has been talking with the minister and has been in consultation with him in the last hour. To the person, those who were in the minister's office are extremely disappointed about this document and this performance.

Why is it that for 10 years as a member of the opposition party he decided that the principle of heritage languages during school hours was worth while supporting and now, when he is in government, he turns right around and takes us a step backward, if anything? Why does he do that?

I think this Minister of Education and this government have a responsibility to three and a half million people in this province; they will not stand being led down the garden path by this government.

The minister had an opportunity to be innovative in this direction. He refused it. He had an opportunity to take a look at Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec to see how they are doing it. The Ministry of Education has been researching this question for the past 10 years. The minister muffed it; he really came up short today.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN THE WORK PLACE

Mr. Mackenzie: I would like to respond to the minister's statement about the right to know

about work place hazards. The best I can say is that I suppose it is better late than never. This was part of the accord that should have been out some time ago, but a little is better than nothing.

The bill is not anywhere near as good as my colleague's Bill 99, and all of us know that. I am not sure that we can expect any more than the ignominious death that resulted for Bill 101 in this House.

There are two things the minister should know that concern us. One is the community right to know; it does appear to be very weak on the first reading of his bill. Secondly, the exemption to identity of a material agent if it is judged to be a trade secret is going to become known, I am sure, as the corporate or business loophole in this legislation in Ontario.

This legislation really should be replaced by my colleague's bill, and I think the minister knows it.

LOW-ALCOHOL PRODUCTS

Mr. Swart: The proposal by the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) on kiddy beer deals with only one part of the problem, and that is the danger of children becoming inebriated or intoxicated. The other, more important problem, that this as a beer-drinking training ground for children, remains. Most of the opposition from school boards, health authorities, legions and parents was on the latter ground, not the first one, that children will graduate to the real stuff at a much younger age.

If the minister had amended the Minors' Protection Act, as I had proposed when I first raised this in the House, he could have solved both problems; but as usual, if he does anything at all it is half-measures.

1410

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Premier. I am sure the Premier, before he signed the Meech Lake accord agreement affecting immigration, will have been aware of how the Quebec point system operates. I wonder if he could outline for the House today the ways in which the Quebec immigration point system differs from that for the rest of Canada.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend continues to flog this issue, even though he has been quite incorrect in a number of the public assertions he has made on the matter. As he knows, the federal government will set the targets across the nation. Obviously, Quebec will

negotiate with them for numbers that come into Quebec, but as my honourable friend knows, those people will have the right to move to any other part of the country should they so choose, because mobility rights predominate in this particular matter. Again, I am not sure what my honourable friend's concerns are.

Mr. Grossman: Just to respond, none of the points we have raised so far has proven to be incorrect. His answers to date have been to hurl epithets but not in fact to show any knowledge whatsoever of the agreement he entered into.

With that in mind, let me repeat the question he chose not to answer. Prior to signing an agreement which would give Quebec a guarantee of 25 per cent of all immigrants coming to Canada, which is what it says, I am sure the Premier understood how the Quebec point system operates. I wonder if he could outline for the House today the way in which the Quebec point system for immigration differs from that for the rest of Canada.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It is obvious that Quebec would like to have French-speaking immigrants. That is the whole object of the exercise, as we have discussed several other times in this House. Obviously, they have to be part of the federal targets. Obviously, they have to be worked out with Quebec in that particular regard and subscribe to the federal rules as well. There are no special provisions except that Quebec would like to have more French-speaking immigrants.

Mr. Grossman: Very simply, the Premier signed an accord that gives Quebec a guarantee of 25 per cent of all the immigration coming to Canada within the federal targets. Admit it. In order to do that, the Quebec point system will be applied to 25 per cent of the immigrants coming to Canada. Could he outline to the House how that point system, which will now determine 25 per cent of immigration to Canada, operates?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend has some fixation that he continues to flog, even though I think the vast majority of people would disagree with his particular point of view, as well as the point he is implicitly trying to make.

There is a target there for Quebec to take up to 25 per cent of the immigration, assuming it can find immigrants who so qualify under the federal point system as well as being, for Quebec's purposes, French-speaking. My honourable friend will be aware that historically Quebec has not fulfilled all those targets, as the rest of the country has not. He will be aware that the vast majority of those people come to Ontario anyway.

I am not sure what point my friend is trying to make today except that, in general terms, they would like French-speaking immigrants. There are no guarantees except the guarantee that they can apply for 25 per cent, plus or minus five per cent, of the immigrants.

Mr. Grossman: My second question for the Premier is this. Would he confirm that the accord reads as I read it? It used the word "guarantee." Notwithstanding what the Attorney General's staff said last week, that maybe he should have said it was a target, in point of fact the Premier signed an agreement giving a guarantee. Would the Premier confirm that if this operates as intended, Quebec has a guarantee that 25 per cent of the people selected to come to Canada in any year will meet its criteria as acceptable to immigration in Quebec?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The point my honourable friend is trying to make is that they are going to come out of somebody else's targets or that there is going to be a massive shift of immigrants from Ontario or Manitoba to Quebec. That just is not the case, and I wish he would stop unwittingly giving that impression. I think it has been proved by everyone who has looked at this document that he is indeed factually incorrect. I do not know why my honourable friend has taken it upon himself to take this particular approach to the matter unless it is born out of some particular problems he personally may have.

Let me say that is not the case. They will achieve 25 per cent of the overall targets. Those are targets; there has been no guarantee of that, and they can attempt to get up to that if they so desire, and other provinces can do the same thing.

Mr. Grossman: There is no need for the Premier to get insulting about it. All we need is for him to know what he signed. We just need him to know what he signed.

The Quebec point system operates significantly differently from the rest of Canada's. For the national immigration program, if you can speak English or French you get nine points towards the total number of points you need to get accepted as an immigrant. Under Quebec—

Hon. Mr. Scott: How many did you get, Larry?

Mr. Grossman: The Attorney General's insecurity is showing again.

Under the Quebec system, if you speak French, you get 15 points; if you speak English, you get two points. Quebec has been guaranteed that of the total number of immigrants coming to

Canada, it has a right to have 25 per cent of them compatible with Quebec and meeting its criteria. If they fill those criteria, there we have it.

Given that 25 per cent of the immigration will be determined on the basis of people getting 15 points for speaking French and two points for speaking English, how can the Premier take the position that nothing has changed?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say to my honourable friend, that is the whole object of the exercise, because Quebec would like to have French-speaking immigrants. As I discussed several days ago, but will repeat to my honourable friend, Quebec has always been concerned, being the only island of francophones in North America, about being washed over by a massive movement of immigration into that province. They want to reinforce their particular distinctiveness, and this is one of the ways to do that. They still have to fly under the federal target, still have to meet the federal criteria, but it is obvious what they are intending to do and what they have been doing for some time under Cullen-Couture.

The honourable member is trying to give the impression, certainly from this line of questioning and questions previously, that there is going to be some interference with family reunification. That is nonsense. It is factually incorrect, and the member knows it. I am glad he has abandoned that argument today, because it does not apply to these particular quotas. He is trying to give the sense that they are going to be stealing immigrants from some other province and that in fact is wrong. Quebec has never hit its targets, as many other provinces have not. Indeed, the federal government has announced it wants to substantially increase the targets of immigration, and none of the interferences my honourable friend talks about will happen.

Mr. Grossman: It is quite clear the Premier still does not know what document he signed.

Let us get back to the point he made. After denying it for many days, he finally acknowledged this afternoon that the point of the exercise is to find more French-speaking immigration. Let us just understand the impact of it before the Premier denies the impact. For 25 per cent of the immigration coming to Canada, the priority simply will be to find people who are French-speaking.

Hon. Mr. Scott: No, no, no.

Mr. Grossman: That is what the Premier just said. He just said that is the impact. That means, in simple terms, that whereas previously—I will wait until the Attorney General has finished briefing the Premier.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I will remind the Leader of the Opposition that this is a final supplementary.

1420

Mr. Grossman: Okay. Will the Premier not agree that where 25 per cent of the total immigration will be skewed specifically to achieve French-speaking immigration, that must impact on what previously was 100 per cent of the immigration, which did not come to this country fettered by a quota for a French-speaking province? Is that not what he has done?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The answer to the member's question is no, I do not agree.

Mr. Grossman: That is factually inaccurate. That is just not so.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend has been so inaccurate over the past few days—

Mr. Grossman: It is not incorrect.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I must say, to hear his approach on this thing, which is factually incorrect, and it has been established by many—I wish my honourable friend would listen to Hugh Segal and John Tory when he interprets this and he might come out with quite a different interpretation. He may want to phone Brian Mulroney, if he does not want to discuss it with me, or some of his other friends.

My friend is alone in his interpretation; just because he believes it does not mean anybody else believes it. I think he does a disservice to this entire discussion by factually misrepresenting the case.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Bellwoods would like to ask a question.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Labour dealing with the case of Mrs. Maria Pinaretta. I raised the case twice last week. It is decision 72, and the Workers' Compensation Board is challenging the decision of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal which granted Mrs. Pinaretta a pension.

The minister will know that the injured worker's representative was the member for Dovercourt (Mr. Lupusella) and that at the very last minute the injured worker's representative abandoned the injured worker, following conversations with the Minister of Labour, leaving her in jeopardy of losing in excess of \$30,000 in compensation benefits.

In view of the seriousness of allegations I am making here and which were made at the

Workers' Compensation Board hearing on Thursday, will the Minister of Labour tell this House exactly what transpired, what conversations took place between the Minister of Labour and the member for Dovercourt which caused the member to abandon Mrs. Pinaretta on the eve of her hearing, leaving her without representation, in extreme jeopardy and in extreme distress and forcing an adjournment of the hearing?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Apparently the member for Bellwoods did not hear the statement made by my colleague the member for Dovercourt—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Who wrote it for him?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member for Dovercourt wrote his own statement, I say to my friend the member for Windsor-Riverside, who so quickly intervenes—inaccurately, as usual.

I say to the member for Bellwoods, and I will say it very clearly so he will understand: there was no conversation between that honourable gentleman and this minister before the member for Dovercourt withdrew from the case at the reconsideration level in front of the appeals tribunal—no conversation, period, full stop.

Mr. McClellan: It can be documented that on—

Mr. D. R. Cooke: Let's see the documents. Where are the documents?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Supplementary.

Mr. McClellan: On Friday the member for Dovercourt was saying to people that he had a conversation with the Minister of Labour some two or three weeks ago, that he spoke to the minister, asked him to intervene and indicated to the minister that he did not want to appear at the Pinaretta hearing when he did not know the minister's position and that he had told the minister this before he sent him this undated letter, which was an exhibit at the hearing.

I ask the Minister of Labour a second time, and I ask him to consider his answer very carefully: Were there conversations with the member for Dovercourt before the member abandoned the injured worker, repudiated his responsibility as a representative and left the injured worker without representation at a hearing in which she stood to lose, and stands to lose, pension benefits in excess of \$30,000? Did he do that, and when?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will repeat for the honourable member again, there was no conversation between the member for Dovercourt and myself prior to the letter which the member for Dovercourt sent to Dr. Elgie, which I believe Dr. Elgie received last Tuesday.

Mr. McClellan: It is an undated letter.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will tell my friend, as I best understand it, what exactly did happen. The member for Dovercourt or an official in his office did speak with a member of my staff and with a member of the policy branch and asked for some factual help. That factual help was offered.

I learned of the decision of the member for Dovercourt to withdraw from this matter on Wednesday of last week, one day after Dr. Elgie's office received the letter. I spoke with the member for Dovercourt after question period and asked him why he intended not to proceed as Mrs. Pinaretta's representative. He informed me that he felt the review was on matters of general policy and law; rather than being a specific case, it was looking at the whole issue and the general policy issue. I said: "I have no views on this. You have represented this lady. This is your choice." The matter was left at that.

Mr. McClellan: There are a number of versions about what happened, some of which have been stated in here. Some of them have been stated outside in other places. I say to the minister quite frankly, they do not add up. Members are saying one thing in here and something else in other places, and they do not add up.

By way of supplementary, the minister made the most extraordinary statement in the *Star* article of Friday, in which he said the member for Dovercourt at the time expressed concern about "going against government policy" as the reason for wanting to withdraw from the case. The implication of that is that Liberal back-benchers cannot represent constituents before tribunals for fear of violating government policy.

I would like to ask the Minister of Labour, what is the matter of government policy which the member for Dovercourt was so afraid of that he left an injured worker abandoned at an important appeal hearing? Was it the right of Mrs. Pinaretta to receive benefits, was it the policy definition of "injury by accident" or was it the right of the Workers' Compensation Board to overturn decisions of the tribunal?

Mr. Speaker: The question has been asked.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: My honourable friend seems to think he can just go on and on making subtle and not-so-subtle innuendoes, which in effect says that the word of an honourable member to another honourable member is not accurate. I have twice denied it, and I want to make it clear once again that there were no prior discussions between the two gentlemen.

Mr. McClellan: Maybe you would like to read Mrs. Pinaretta's affidavit.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I can say only to my friend the member for Bellwoods that, for my part, I simply made it clear to the member for Dovercourt that the decision was his. He had represented this constituent all the way through the appeals hearings—indeed, right through the hearings of the appeals tribunal. Obviously, the member for Dovercourt did quite an outstanding job, since Mrs. Pinaretta was successful at the appeals tribunal level. I would hope all constituents would have that kind of quality representation.

In terms of the review by the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Board on matters of general law and policy, if he wished to play a role in that appeal and in that review, that was his business. If not, that was also his business.

1430

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I wonder whether the minister can tell us how the vacancy rates have improved in the past year in the following cities: Barrie, Brantford, Cornwall, Hamilton, Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo, Oshawa, Peterborough and Toronto. Focusing on Metropolitan Toronto for the sake of argument, I wonder whether he can tell us how the vacancy rates have improved in Toronto in the last year.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member has asked me if the vacancy rate has improved in Toronto. The vacancy rate did not improve in Toronto, as the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. report had shown, but I would like to remind the honourable member that we had a massive immigration coming from other areas into Toronto. As fast as we can build and put up more rental units, they are being absorbed. I can further state that if we did not have the initiative we have today, the matter would be much worse than it is.

Mr. Rae: I think, for the record, the minister ought to be able to admit that in all the cities I have listed the vacancy rate is now at its lowest point in history. In Toronto, for example, the vacancy rate is 0.1 of one per cent, which means 400 vacant apartments in Toronto—and 10 vacant apartments in the city of Oshawa, if I can use an example that brings it home.

I wonder if the minister can recall, when he made his statement in December 1985, how many new rental units a year would be necessary to deal with the housing crisis.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I would have to go back to confirm, to give the member the exact figure at that time, in order to arrest the vacancy rate there,

the need there. We concentrated on the backlog and also the need that was there. The comprehensive housing initiatives that we put in place were 6,700 government-assisted housing units from the nonprofit group. That is much more than what had been in place.

I know the honourable member would like, within 18 months from formulation of the program to construction, to see a completion by time. It does take some time to have those units completed.

Mr. Rae: We are all reasonable people in this House. We have asked the minister some questions which he has not been able to answer.

Just for the minister's information, he told us in December 1985 that it was his estimate that Ontario would need 24,000 new rental units a year in order to meet the crisis. The minister will know that in 1986 only 10,900 units were built and CMHC estimates that in 1987 only 13,800 rental units will be built, which means that in a two-year period we are falling about 25,000 units behind. We are meeting about half the need in Ontario today.

I wonder if the minister can explain to the House why it is that none of the government's targets have been met and that his promises in the accord have not been met with respect to projections of new nonprofit housing starts and affordable housing starts. We have working families today who are not able to find any place to live.

The families that are getting into Ontario Housing today are, by virtue of the statements made by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and changes in policy in the government, women who can prove they have been battered. I have constituents lined up at my door who cannot meet the new point system established, who are not able to find housing and who are doubled up and tripled up in their apartments. Every member in this House has the same situation. Just when is the minister going to start to meet his promises on affordable housing for working families in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Again, the honourable member is incorrect in his statistics. In government-assisted housing, for the last 18 months, we have committed 23,410 units. The rental starts in 1986 were 10,320.

Mr. Wildman: That is what he said.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Of course, he was correct in that. We have also seen a very aggressive ownership building that took place in the past two years. To say that we have not met our quota—I would say that what we have seen in the past 18

months, this province has not seen in the past 10 years.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr. Grossman: I have a new question for the Premier. To use the words of the Meech Lake accord, would the Premier not agree that the federal government, in making Canada pension plan and disabled changes, had as the national objective that all disabled persons receiving CPP would get \$150 a month increase? Would he not agree that was the national objective?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: No, I do not think so.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier really would not?

Interjections

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: Let me refer the Premier to two things. First, in an article from December 15, 1985, his Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) hailed these changes as "quite a breakthrough" and he agreed with all the others that there would be these kinds of changes to CPP and disabled support. Second is the letter from the Minister of National Health and Welfare indicating specifically to the provincial ministers that it is the national intention to increase the disabled CPP provisions net by \$150 a month and specifically saying that no money should be deducted by the provincial governments.

Given these two documents, would the Premier not agree that he is in a position where he has, on this program, thwarted a national objective clearly set out by the federal government? Therefore, he has shown specifically how the accord will encourage people like him to thwart the national objective, which in this case was clearly to put \$150 a month into the pockets of the disabled.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: With great respect, I think that is nonsense and I think my honourable friend knows it. As I understand it, all the other provinces responded in general terms the way the province of Ontario did. The members saw massive new transfers into the hands of the disabled, making it fair and not creating two classes of disabled. This is the kind of flexibility that is allowed under co-operative federalism.

We have made substantial contributions to the disabled. One can argue it is not enough and that is a reasonable point. However, I can tell my honourable friend we believe we have taken this national program, as the other provinces have, and built on it to serve the disabled community at

large. We think that is a better social objective and a better deployment of those funds.

Mr. Speaker: Is there a new question?

The member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) would like the attention of the Leader of the Opposition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions.

Might I remind the minister of his statement of April 23, which contained these exact words: "Effective immediately, the rates for all automobile insurance categories are capped at the levels in force today." The minister will know that this in fact has not taken place. Will the minister tell this House about, and table, the directive or directives which he sent to insurance companies as a result of that statement?

I do not want an explanation of what the caps are. I know that. I want to know what the minister told the insurance companies they had to do.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know what that refers to is that the various categories that are in place to be used for rating policies were capped as of April 23 and they were informed that this was the case.

Mr. Swart: I have to say that is a pretty convoluted interpretation of the words "effective immediately" which were given on April 23.

I have a letter here, dated April 27, just four days later, from the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Insurance Co. of Canada to all its brokers in Ontario. It says it will comply with legislation but then makes this statement: "It may be some time before the proposed legislation is enacted and, in the meantime, we are advised by the ministry to continue business as usual including the rate adjustments announced on April 8, 1987 for Personal Automobile and on April 20, 1987 for Commercial Automobile, both effective May 1, 1987, for New Business, and June 1, 1987 for Renewals."

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Swart: That statement is directly contrary to the minister's promise of "effective immediately" capping on April 23. The minister was, and is, telling the motorists of this province one thing and telling the insurance companies another. Is it not correct that the minister has deliberately misled this House and the motorists of this province?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I think the member for Welland-Thorold should reconsider

what he just stated. Please withdraw the words "deliberately misled."

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Would the member withdraw? Yes, or no?

Mr. Swart: Mr. Speaker, this minister has been using the insurance companies' lies—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Yes or no?

Mr. Swart: —and distortions about the western plan, time and time again in this House.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Yes or no?

Mr. Swart: Respectfully, no.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have no choice but to name the member. Please assist the member.

Mr. Swart left the chamber.

1440

DUMP SITE

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. On May 28, I asked the minister why he allowed the Innisfil land site to continue to operate without taking appropriate measures to ensure that it would not contaminate the drinking water of nearby residents. I wonder if the minister can answer my question now.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: First, I should indicate that the chronology the honourable member gave was not exactly accurate. He suggested, for instance, that the dump had been closed down, the implication being that certificates of approval had been revoked. They had not. As he knows, the operators had lost the contract with the community and another operator got the contract. On the next tendering, it went back to the people who actually own this site. That is the background there.

Further, I want to tell the member that previous to his asking the question—he may recall that it was probably a couple of weeks before that—there had been a meeting between officials of the Ministry of the Environment and residents to discuss this particular matter, and all along there has been continued discussions with them. On Friday, May 29, there were further discussions and the ministry demanded a remedial action plan, which I would expect within 10 days of now, to deal with the implications of the problems at the site. In my view, there is clearly a need for that remedial action and I have ordered it.

Mr. Rowe: "Continued discussions" are about all the minister has done for the last two years with respect to this site. Tests undertaken by his ministry just last week revealed that a marsh

located beside the dump is contaminated with chlorides, heavy metals, toluene and phenols at levels 500 times the acceptable limit for drinking water.

Why has the minister allowed this dump site to continue operating for the past 24 months without taking steps to protect either the local residents or the environment? With respect, the minister has sat there for 24 months and has done nothing.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member will be aware that tests have been conducted on various occasions on the drinking water, the well water, that exists in that particular area, and that consistently the tests have indicated that it meets all the objectives of Ontario. We have been doing that testing, we have been doing that monitoring and we have in place a remedial action plan at the present time we think can be effective, which will in fact involve collecting the leachate.

The member will also be aware—and this is always a matter of concern, I know—it is the underlying material that is there, that, unlike some situations we are confronted with in the province, there is a fairly heavy clay belt underneath. In fact, I know my friend will be aware that up in his area there are other sites where that is not in existence and the hydrogeology is such that problems are considerably worse. However, we are taking that remedial action because we think it is necessary, and I think the member will find this action will be effective.

MONITORING PRISONERS ON LEAVE

Ms. Bryden: I have a question for the Minister of Correctional Services. In his leadoff for the Correctional Services estimates last January, the minister said he was investigating new techniques such as electronic monitoring of prisoners on leave, but he also admitted “that it was a new and as yet largely untried concept whose ethical and practical implications will have to be explored in considerable depth.”

Why is the minister now announcing to the press but not to the House that his ministry is planning to undertake a pilot program this year to test the use of an ankle bracelet with a transmitter to monitor prisoners serving sentences at home on weekends? Has he fully explored the human rights implications of monitoring prisoners in the same way that wildlife researchers monitor animals and whether the use of such technologies is an invasion of privacy?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: In trying to address one of the questions, it was a part of our estimates and it

is still very much under study now as it was then. The issue was raised by the media as to whether any consideration had ever been given to it. I assume that was raised by them because of the ongoing experiment in British Columbia as well as in the United States.

We have not made definite plans because it is such a contentious issue. We are very much aware of the concerns for human rights. Before any program is entered into, it has to be very thoroughly thought out to see the implications for those persons and for society in general.

Ms. Bryden: I understand this device, which is also named the electronic garter, was rejected by the federal government last January because of fears that it violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Will the minister undertake to put his plans for use of this technology on hold until he has consulted with the Ontario Human Rights Commission and experts on the charter and has also investigated methods of reducing overcrowding in our jails by developing more constructive alternatives to incarceration?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I think the record will show we have been working in great depth for alternatives to incarceration within the community over the two years of my ministry. The whole issue is not something we have put on hold but continue in an ongoing study. It is our responsibility to see what type of alternatives we can provide that are humane and are responsible actions of a caring government.

I believe also it was a private agency that rejected the use of the devices rather than the federal government.

ACID RAIN

Mr. McGuigan: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I understand we have lost the appeal to the US Supreme Court. This was the case set out by the Carter administration that transboundary pollution was a problem and should be dealt with.

What, if any, further remedies can be taken for what up to this time has been an undeclared war on our environment?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I thought you would ask this question, Larry.

Mr. Grossman: This is the question you answered last week.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As members of the House, including my friend the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), who makes reference to last week, will be aware, there has been

an ongoing court case in which Ontario is one of the participants, along with a number of US states. That case has attempted to uphold the Environmental Protection Agency commitment, in my view, in 1980-81 that there be an ordering of those states which are producing acid rain to come up with a viable and useful program to abate it.

What has happened is that at the Supreme Court, we appealed the Court of Appeal's—

Mr. Rae: We know what has happened. We don't need the background.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I think members need some background.

Mr. Rae: No, we don't need the backfill.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The leader of the third party wants background and I thought he might want to listen. What has happened is in a—

Mr. Rae: You have more landfill in your answers than there is in the province.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am trying to answer this question and I am subjected to amusing interjections by the leader of the third party.

Mr. Speaker: Good point.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Anyway, what has happened, in effect, is that the Supreme Court has refused to hear the appeal of Ontario and the several states.

Mrs. Grier: The question was, what are you going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I think what is significant about this—and the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) will be interested in this—what is particularly significant about this case is the fact that the other side in the case, the EPA, used the fact that it was alleged that the federal government in the US and the federal government in Canada were in fact dealing with this problem. It is a clear indication that when that action is inadequate between the two, we should not give any credence to this south of the border.

1450

Mr. McGuigan: I understand we have lost in another respect, that the Reagan administration now has given up funding for research to try to help alleviate this problem. I wonder whether the minister could comment on that.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member probably heard media reports this morning that the US administration was going to cease its efforts into research on the cost implications of implementing acid rain abatement legislation regulations.

In my view, the reason for that is obvious. Some of the information has been derived from

consulting firms that have done work for US senators and congressmen and these consulting firms have clearly demonstrated that there would be a job gain and a tremendous economic gain from the implementation of these controls.

The administration seems to want to throw millions upon millions of dollars into something that will simply postpone the day of reckoning for the clean-coal technology and postpone the day of reckoning for polluters in the US, instead of putting it into what I think would be viable research and that is demonstrating clearly why acid rain abatement legislation regulations would be a total benefit to the United States. It is disappointing but not surprising that the administration has decided to abandon that, but I am sure several congressmen will want to see it pursued.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. Ashe: My question is for the Premier and deals with a topic he is somewhat familiar with, conflict of interest. Does the Premier think it is proper for a member of his cabinet to participate in cabinet discussions on a matter about which he represented a customer or a client before being sworn in to that cabinet post?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I assume the member is referring to his bill and I gather he is referring to something previously done in a previous incarnation by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott). If the member is suggesting there is anything improper, he should please let me know.

Mr. Ashe: I am not quite sure what that answer was, whether he said it was or it was not proper. In any event, let me be more specific in my supplementary.

Does the Premier really believe that it is proper for the Attorney General, the person he relies on so much, to have involved himself in the issue of the opening of legitimate bookstores on Sunday when he represented the same bookstores' owners, albeit I understand he had a falling out with them, before joining cabinet? Is this the real reason why third reading of Bill 188 has been delayed or blocked, because the Attorney General told the Premier to do so, so that he could get even? I am surprised that would be the case. Is it so?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My friend will rest assured that this very clearly is not the case, and I am not sure how he could have the temerity even to suggest it was the case. What the member will find from the executive council of this govern-

ment is dispassionate, objective, well thought out opinions on every single subject.

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Mr. Grande: My question is to the Minister of Education. His party for the past 10 years has taken a position in this Legislature of supporting heritage languages programs during the school day and his party as late as December 18 supported Bill 80 unanimously in this Legislature and therefore supported the principle.

In the standing committee on social development in February of this year, the minister said he was going to introduce policy direction, which means he was going to talk about heritage languages during the school day. I would like to find out and I am sure thousands of other people in this province would like to find out what happened between February of this year and today that made the minister change his mind completely, 180 per cent.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I believe the announcement today of our proposal will be well received by the community, not only by those who have a keen interest in the heritage languages program but also by the broad educational community and others with an important view and interest in this area.

We have announced our intention to move forward in five very important areas. I want to have the advice of the community between now and the end of September. I say to my honourable friend, again, we have in our proposals recognized that local communities and local boards have an important role to play. We have said, for example, that school boards will now be required to provide heritage language instruction where the parents of 25 students so request. We have said that additional resources are going to be applied to teacher training and to the development of learning materials.

I think that reasonable people will see this initiative, and hopefully the responses to the paper, as very positive steps forward in an area that is not only important in terms of the educational community but also speaks directly to the very important multicultural reality that is so central to a modern Ontario.

Mr. Grande: I do not know where the minister has been in the last 10 to 12 years. I really do not know. He is taking us back at least one dozen years in regard to this.

Does the minister realize that what he has done today is to signal to all the school boards in the province of Ontario and to all the other people who have legitimate concerns about Bill 80—and

they will be coming before the social development committee to talk to us about those concerns—that he is not interested in the heritage languages program during school hours? Does the minister realize that he has done that? Since the minister—

Mr. Speaker: That was a good question. A very good question. Do you realize, minister?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would like to address that question very directly and, hopefully, very briefly by saying that I do not share the honourable member's assessment at all. We have introduced a policy paper that speaks very directly to a number of very significant concerns, not the least of which, of course, is the requirement that this paper contains that a board must now provide heritage language instruction where the parents of 25 pupils within that jurisdiction request it.

I want to say that I have listened, along with my colleagues from communities like Yorkview and Downsview and York East and Parkdale and Brampton and elsewhere, to a number of people who have said that it is important as well to dedicate more resources to the area of teacher training and learning materials development. Those key areas are also addressed.

My responsibility as Minister of Education is to ensure that we have a school system that is sensitive to the very important multicultural reality to which I have spoken. I have said, as well, that we want to ensure that what we do in the area of heritage languages is in the context of the best possible educational opportunity for all in the province of Ontario. I believe that is what this proposal speaks to, and that is why I think it will be favourably received by reasonable people across the province.

HOUSING BUDGET

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Could he please advise this House by how much he overspent his ministry budget last year and where those moneys were allocated?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is a very good question to which I cannot give a precise answer at the moment. I will take that as notice and get back to the member on it.

Mr. Jackson: It is quite unusual, because the minister and I had somewhat of an exchange on this very subject last Thursday in this House. For the refreshment of his memory, he underspent his budget in his first year by \$25 million. He was 10 per cent under budget. In his second year, he was \$67 million or 20 per cent under budget.

Hon. Mr. Scott: You asked him if he overspent.

Mr. Jackson: The minister does not even know if he overspent. That is the point.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It seems there is a debate going on here among a number of members. I ask the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) to place a supplementary question.

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Mr. Jackson: My supplementary question has to do with the statement that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) put into his budget where he said that the provision of affordable housing still remains a challenge for his minister. Given that the minister is underspending at that rate and is unable to communicate to this House how he is resolving the growing housing crisis in Ontario, will he be underspending by 30 per cent and further compounding the housing crisis in this province at the rate he is going?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member is asking for exact figures. I told him I did not have them. What he does not realize is that the programs we have put in place are taking more time to get on stream. As he is quite aware, that is because of the details of Bill 51 and the setting up of the rent review board.

Many programs did not come on stream earlier and, as a fiscally responsible government, we do not intend to spend the money before the programs are in place. If the member is suggesting that we should spend all the money in that short time, I have to wonder. Maybe that is how the previous government behaved. The member can rest assured that with the programs in place early, all the money that we have this time will be spent properly.

NATIONAL PARK

Mr. Wildman: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. On May 6, the minister in answer to a question from me stated: "The members are looking at the minister who agreed with the federal government to set aside one of the finest and largest tracts of land in the Bruce Peninsula for a new national park, one of the first in this province in many years."

While it is true that in the fall of 1986 the federal Minister of the Environment announced that an agreement would be signed, nothing has been done as yet. There is still no agreement; there is still no national park. Could the minister explain what exactly he is trying to take credit for? Is he really taking credit for the bungling and stalling by his ministry which has meant that we

still do not have a national park in the Bruce Peninsula?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I guess it is quite a lesson in the Legislature to hear the kind of comments that those members would like to get on the record. They vary so far from the reality that sometimes one hardly wishes to respond.

The member knows full well that the commitment on the part of the Ontario government to have Bruce declared as a federal park is a major undertaking required to initiate the whole program. Without the will of this ministry to undertake that kind of proposal with the federal government, we would not even be talking about a national park in the Bruce Peninsula.

I have to tell the member that I feel a great deal of pride that this particular government is moving forward in a direction that is going to please a great many Ontarians when we see a national park up in the Bruce Peninsula. We are waiting for the details to sign that agreement, and I would think they are not far from being forthcoming in the immediate future.

Mr. Wildman: In view of the minister's statement about a commitment and a will to establish a national park, can he explain why it is that 3,088 acres of land at Driftwood Cove with about five miles of shoreline, including the Bruce Trail, have been sold into private hands and were not purchased by his ministry or the federal government for this park? Why did his ministry allow this land, which should have been part of the national park, to be sold into private hands? Will he make a commitment that he will ensure that this does not happen in the future?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked twice.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I suppose that if we were to adhere to the policy of that particular party, all the land in the country would be owned by the government. That is just not the case in this province. There is a good mix of a resolve to have the private sector and the government and all the other players participate to the fullest in this province.

Mr. Rae: Oh, it is coming now. I see it very clearly now. Now we are getting it. Now give us the Bill Jarvis stuff.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I wish the leader of the third party would be quiet, because as much as he thinks he does, he does not know everything. There are things he could learn right here in this Legislature.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: It is very difficult to respond in a way that is sensible if that gentleman is going to interfere to the degree he does. I have to tell the leader of the third party he does not know what he is talking about.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Jackson: I have another question for the Minister of Housing. Could the minister please tell this House how many rental units his government has constructed in the last year and a half under his Renterprise program which was to deliver 5,000 new units to Ontario residents? In the last year and a half, how many have been completed?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The Renterprise program was a highly successful program by the government. On our first call, we had aimed for 5,000 units to be built under the Renterprise program. We got a tremendous response on our first call and we had a second call on that.

We are very proud to note that the Renterprise program is working effectively. There were some projects that were taken that were returned because some of the builders felt they could do it on their own. The program is doing very well.

Mr. Jackson: It is unfortunate the minister does not understand his own figures. The truth is that his program fell short by almost 1,400 units in a year and a half.

Is the minister going to extend this program, or is he going to admit publicly that it has fallen miserably short of its targets and that he is going to try to come up with some alternative? Is he going to extend the program in the hope that it might work, or is he going to admit publicly that it is not meeting its targets?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The program works very effectively. Whether we will extend the program is a matter under consideration. We had two calls on this program. Those in the opposition felt that no one would take on this program. The matter of whether we will have another call is under consideration.

ARGOSY FINANCIAL GROUP OF CANADA LTD.

Mr. Philip: I have a question to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. On May 28, the report of the standing committee on the Ombudsman was tabled in this House. Both the majority and the minority reports advocated some form of compensation to the victims of the Argosy collapse. Now that the minister has had time to read both those reports, can he tell us

what his position is? Will there be some form of compensation to the victims of Argosy?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that the committee report stated that there was no regulatory failure and felt that there should be no compensation; however, it suggested that we should take a look at some ex gratia payment to a level of 25 per cent. We are in the process of taking a look at it.

Mr. Philip: The minister will be aware that, in opposition, his party clearly advocated compensation for the Argosy victims. Can the minister tell us when a decision will be taken as to whether these victims will be compensated by his ministry? What is the date?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I cannot give the member a date. It is a situation that will be considered first by my ministry and then a reference will be made to the cabinet. That will be a government decision.

DUMP SITE

Mr. Rowe: I have a question to the Ministry of the Environment regarding the Innisfil landfill site. Can the minister tell me what remedial action he is taking which I anticipate will be pumping the leachate back over the garbage? Can he tell me how that will take this contaminated plume out of the ground near the neighbours' houses?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member is, of course, presuming that is the case. As I indicated to him in response to his question earlier in question period, in fact the Ministry of the Environment is consulting with the owner, the operator and the consultant. As I indicated, I expect that, certainly within 10 days, perhaps even by the end of this week, we will have a remedial action plan. That plan will be one that has to meet the requirements of the Ministry of the Environment.

I think the member has indicated that he believes there is a certain plan of action that has been agreed upon. I can indicate clearly to the member that is not the case. Rather, what we did was to go into some testing in that area. It has been ongoing testing. We identified the problem that exists. We looked at the extent of the problem, how far the plume would move, for instance, and where the leachate might be. When that has been identified, we will be in a better position to determine the specific remedial action that might be taken.

It is my view that it must be the best possible remedial action that can be taken, because if we do not implement that, as the member knows,

there will be an opportunity then for the plume to be extended farther and there will be an opportunity for the leachate to escape to other places. The plan he has suggested is the case is not necessarily so. I will be happy to share that particular plan with him since he represents the area.

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PETITION DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Pollock: I have a petition that reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funding for a haemo-dialysis unit for one of the hospitals in Peterborough."

It is signed by some members of Peterborough county council and residents of the county of Peterborough.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Mr. Callahan from the select committee on health presented a report and moved the adoption of its recommendations.

Mr. Callahan: Briefly, I would like to thank all the people who assisted us, both staff and members of the committee, in allowing us to arrive at an interim report. As the members of the House will know, the select committee was struck in July 1986. We met and determined that we would deal with this issue first. We met during March and April 1987 and this report is an interim report with our findings. The focus was on availability, affordability and quality, and the report itself contains an analysis of our findings in that regard.

I indicate as well that there was a dissenting opinion rendered by the members of the third party.

Those are my comments.

On motion by Mr. Callahan, the debate was adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Wrye moved first reading of Bill 79, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Motion agreed to.

MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Keyes moved first reading of Bill 81, An Act to amend the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act.

Motion agreed to.

OTTAWA CIVIL SERVICE RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACT

Mr. Sterling moved, on behalf of Mr. Bennett, first reading of Bill Pr4, An Act respecting the Ottawa Civil Service Recreational Association.

Motion agreed to.

PORT STANLEY TERMINAL RAIL INCORPORATED ACT

Mr. Reycraft moved, on behalf of Ms. E. J. Smith, first reading of Bill Pr18, An Act respecting Port Stanley Terminal Rail Incorporated

Motion agreed to.

CONSTRUCTION LIEN AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Fulton moved first reading of Bill 82, An Act to amend the Construction Lien Act, 1983.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: Today, I have introduced a bill repealing the Ministry of Transportation and Communications Creditors Payment Act, first enacted in 1975. Prior to that year, those companies that supplied labour, materials and services to contractors and subcontractors employed by ministries and agencies of the Ontario government to carry out construction projects were protected by the Public Works Creditors Payment Act in the event contractors or subcontractors did not pay their suppliers. In 1975, that act was repealed and all other ministries and agencies of the Ontario government became subject to the Mechanics' Lien Act, now the Construction Lien Act, 1983.

Recent events have revealed a number of shortcomings in the Ministry of Transportation and Communications Creditors Payment Act. Although some thought was given to amending the act to correct its deficiencies, a submission by the Ontario Road Builders' Association caused my ministry to review the pros and cons of adopting the Construction Lien Act, 1983.

After an extensive review, it was decided that the ministry should bring its construction activities under the scheme created by the Construction

Lien Act, 1983. Claims arising under contracts awarded prior to the date this bill comes into force will continue to be dealt with under the provisions of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications Creditors Payment Act.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CREDITORS PAYMENT REPEAL ACT

Hon. Mr. Fulton moved first reading of Bill 83, An Act to repeal the Ministry of Transportation and Communications Creditors Payment Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: This bill will bring claims related to the construction of the ministry's highways, which in the past have been uniquely subject to the Ministry of Transportation and Communications Creditors Payment Act, under the Construction Lien Act, 1983.

CANADA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE AND SCHOOL OF GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL STUDIES ACT

Mr. Allen moved first reading of Bill Pr1, An Act respecting Canada Christian College and School of Graduate Theological Studies.

Motion agreed to.

RACE TRACKS TAX ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved first reading of Bill 84, An Act to revise the Race Tracks Tax Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: These are relatively minor housekeeping adjustments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADONA PROPERTIES LIMITED ACT

Ms. Fish moved second reading of Bill Pr2, An Act to revive Adona Properties Limited.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

QUETICO FOUNDATION ACT

Ms. Fish moved, on behalf of Mr. Bernier, second reading of Bill Pr11, An Act to revive The Quetico Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

TOWN OF LINDSAY ACT

Mr. G. I. Miller moved second reading of Bill Pr20, An Act respecting the Town of Lindsay.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ACT

Ms. Fish moved second reading of Bill Pr39, An Act respecting Canadian Opera Company.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

House in committee of the whole.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

Consideration of Bill 34, An Act to provide for Freedom of Information and Protection of Individual Privacy.

Mr. Chairman: We have in front of us Bill 34. Do any honourable members have any questions, comments or amendments to any sections, and if so, to what sections?

Ms. Gigantes: I believe the amendments I would like to place now are the first that will come in the bill.

I move that the definition of "institution"—

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me. Rather than move them at this point, we are just listing them. I have changes to the definitions, subsections 2(1) and 2(3) and to section 10a. Are those Ms. Gigantes's only two amendments?

Ms. Gigantes: No.

Mr. Chairman: Section 23.

Ms. Gigantes: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: I have two amendments—

Ms. Gigantes: Four.

Mr. Chairman: —three, four, five; five amendments to section 23. Am I correct?

Ms. Gigantes: Four.

Mr. Sterling: I think there is one of mine there.

Ms. Gigantes: Five. You are right, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, thank you. There is another amendment to section 23 that is not hers. Excuse me, members, I am just getting the amendments of the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) out of the way. That appears to be it. Am I correct?

The member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) has some amendments.

Mr. Sterling: Mr. Chairman, I was going to try to correlate them for you. I have an amendment to section 10 and I also have an amendment to section 23. The member for Ottawa Centre has four amendments to section

23. I have amendments to section 59, an amendment to section 68 and an amendment to section 72.

Mr. Chairman: That amendment to section 68 is the addition of a section 68a. Am I correct?

Mr. Sterling: That is correct.

Mr. Chairman: The amendment to section 10 is the addition of a section 10a, and you have two amendments to section 59; is that correct?

Mr. Sterling: That is correct.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Are there any other amendments, comments and questions of any members to any sections, and if so, to what sections? There being none, it appears that the first amendment we have is to subsection 2(1).

Section 1 agreed to.

On section 2:

Ms. Gigantes: I move that the definition of "institution" in subsection 2(1) of the bill as reprinted as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee be amended by adding thereto the following clause:

"(ab) any university in Ontario, and"

Mr. Chairman: May I point out to the member that she is amending subsection 2(1). Correct? The wording you used is different from the copy I have in front of me. Do you have another copy? For example, the words you read are not the same as those in your amendment, "as reprinted by the Legislative Assembly committee."

Ms. Gigantes: That is correct, Mr. Chairman. I read it correctly.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, and that is not in my copy, so may I please have a copy of the amendment as read out by you?

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that the definition of "institution" in subsection 2(1) of the bill as reprinted as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee be amended by adding thereto the following clause:

"(ab) any university in Ontario, and"

1530

Ms. Gigantes: Members will note that the reprinted version of the bill has an amendment to this section. In fact, this section is an amendment. What we have attempted to do is to make provision for governmental organizations other than the province of Ontario to come under the aegis of this legislation, or this legislation amended more probably, within a three-year period.

The members will notice that clause 2(1)(b), which has been added to the definition of

"institution" in the bill: "the corporation of every municipality in Ontario, every local board as defined by the Municipal Affairs Act, every authority, board, commission, corporation, office or organization of persons whose members or officers are appointed or chosen by or under the authority of the council of the corporation of a municipality in Ontario," on page 5 of the reprinted bill as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee, is subject to being folded into the coverage of this bill, under subsection 2(3), three years after the coming into effect of this legislation.

The amendment before the committee right now is one which would add that coverage for universities in Ontario. I believe it was the intent of the committee in extending this legislation to say that within three years we would have access to information, in particular access to information but also personal privacy protection for residents of Ontario in these other organizations.

It is something that all members of the Legislature will recognize the need for and we also would like to make sure that is true in terms of the relationship of individual citizens with the universities of this province. The universities have had some qualms about having this particular bill applied to them as is, as would other organizations which have been mentioned in clause 2(1)(b). However, the government will be put on notice that the amendments required to make these organizations fit easily under the bill would be required within three years.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I apologize for being late.

This amendment was moved in this form or a similar form in the committee and I believe it was rejected by the committee. Like the honourable member and probably most members in the House, I believe that freedom of information—both the principle and the practice—should be taken to universities across Ontario at an early date.

We do not believe, however, that this bill is the form in which freedom of information should come to the universities in Ontario. The problems that confront our universities in Ontario are very different from the problems that confront government. I would regard the appropriate response to be to develop a bill for universities if they indicate any unwillingness in the next short period of time to develop freedom of information processes of their own. It is for that reason the government will be opposing the amendment.

Mr. McFadden: I would like to rise here to speak very briefly in opposition to this particular amendment. Until about April of this year, I was

our party's critic of Colleges and Universities and, over the two-year period I had that particular position I had the opportunity to travel and visit most of the universities in this province.

In addition to that, I have also had the opportunity to talk with university administration officials, members of faculty, students and so on about the problems on the various campuses, and also about a very important and critical issue I believe is very present in post-secondary education. That is really the question of the autonomy of our institutions of post-secondary education, particularly in the university sector.

It seems to me that in this Legislature we should be trying to foster and develop enhanced autonomy within our universities. I know very substantial public funding is provided to our universities, perhaps to an unhealthy extent in the case of some of them, but the fact is that the universities are substantially publicly funded.

My concern about this particular amendment is that it is my very strong view that this amendment would transmit to the public, and certainly to the universities, that the universities are considered to be within the same classification as ministries of the Ontario government, various municipal corporations and government agencies, boards and commissions. It is my view that the universities are not in the same classification as Ontario Hydro, the Ministry of the Attorney General or the government of the city of Toronto.

In the case of these various public bodies mentioned right now under subsection 2(1) in the definition of "institution," in each case these bodies are managed either by elected officials or by directors and officials appointed by government. In this province, we have a long and I think very distinguished tradition of respecting the autonomy of our universities. I know that the universities today are not happy with this amendment and certainly I think it would be premature for us simply to add universities to this definition of "institution."

I question as well, even down the line, whether we should go ahead and have universities brought into the ambit of government institutions. I think there is real merit for us to be fostering in Ontario university institutions that are independent, have a substantial degree of freedom from government direction and have an ability to make their own decisions without coercion from government in any way, shape or form. It seems to me that kind of freedom is a necessary ingredient of a strong system of post-secondary education.

Perhaps not everybody agrees that freedom of information legislation would in any way impair that, but I suggest that the direction and context in which this amendment is made tends to work against a time-honoured tradition of university autonomy in this province. I suggest this amendment should involve considerably more thought than passing it today. I suggest the views of the boards of governors of the universities across Ontario should be more actively explored. I cannot tell what they will recommend to this House and to the minister, but I do not think the various boards of governors and the university administrations are going to be too happy with the inclusion of universities with ministries of the government, municipal corporations and government agencies, boards and commissions.

If anything, the inclusion of universities under this definition would confirm a real worry that is developing within the university system about the amount of government direction that is starting to occur within its institutions. This would simply confirm that worry and I suggest would in the long run be hurtful to university autonomy.

Therefore, I would not support this particular motion at this time. Perhaps at a later date, after the university community has been fully canvassed and these issues of university autonomy and freedom have been addressed, it could be brought back to the House for some further consideration. Certainly, my position and our position is that this amendment is premature, and we would even go so far as to say that at this stage it would be contrary to good public policy.

1540

Ms. Gigantes: It is clear that this motion will not pass, but I am going to say a few more words on the subject of the motion.

First of all, the way the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden) has addressed the question has been to suggest that we never have policy issues involving access to information or requiring documentation that could come through the provision of information through access-to-information legislation such as this at the level of our universities in Ontario. That is simply not the case and he knows that.

On the whole question of the makeup of our faculties, "Do we have Canadian-trained faculties?" was a question which, a few years back, was of enormous import in Ontario. In order to find out whether we had Canadian-trained faculties and what kind of Canadian content was in the programs at our universities, we sought access to information from those universities.

Some of my colleagues had a great deal of difficulty getting any information from the universities.

The same kinds of issues come up when we are looking at the question of how many women or people of visible minority background or immigrant background are appointed in our universities. What effect does that have upon the training of the people who will be coming through our universities and out into positions of influence in our society over the next five or 10 years? Those are very large questions.

I want to tell both the member for Eglinton and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) something they know, which is that every ministry of government, every agency of government, every municipal corporation, every one of the institutions for which we are providing some framework for access to information under this legislation feels that it is a unique institution, a unique organization. None other is like it in Ontario, and a general bill cannot be applied to it. Of course, the universities will make that claim. They have done it very strongly and clearly in defence of their interests as they see them, which is perfectly acceptable.

However, we are providing, by way of this motion, that within three years all this consultation and noninjurious haste that the member for Eglinton refers to should operate. In fact, the universities could come forward, knowing full well that the bill would apply to them in one form or another within three years; they could make us, as a Legislature, some decent proposals about how they should be brought into the structure of this legislation.

They should be in it. We all know they should be in it, and at this stage it is silly to say that the other elements of our governmental structure in Ontario that we provide for within the bill will be brought in within three years but universities will not be. That is nothing but silliness.

Mr. McFadden: On the point raised by the member for Ottawa Centre: actually, in her remarks she confirmed the worry I had; she equated the universities with other public agencies and government bodies. I do not know that the universities consider themselves to be public agencies or government bodies. I certainly have never felt that the University of Toronto is a public agency. I think it is an autonomous institution of higher learning. It seems to me that there is a real merit in maintaining that kind of independence from government for institutions of higher learning, for all kinds of reasons.

What she has just confirmed is exactly what I was concerned about. I can understand a special provision or even a special act that might provide to students and others some special rights or a code of rights in connection with the institution itself or in relation to specific items of information that may relate to them on the campuses and so on, but I find that to equate the Ontario university system to government boards, commissions and agencies is exactly what I was concerned about.

I do not know what the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen) feels about this. I suppose he supports the situation but I, for one, cannot and would not support the equation of Ontario's universities with public bodies and government boards, commissions and agencies.

If that is what the honourable member thinks they are, then the universities do have a lot to worry about, because that is not how they view themselves. That would mean a major philosophical change in terms of the government's attitude towards the universities. I do not believe any government in Ontario until now has viewed the universities of Ontario as being on the same level as government boards, commissions and departments.

Mr. Philip: This is on the same point. If we look at some of the history of the relationship of the government with the University of Toronto, and indeed with some other universities in this province, we see a very strange relationship, particularly with ministers such as Dunlop. We see Conservative ministers who, in fact, had very direct relationships—indeed, I might say very directive types of relationships—with the university.

Anyone who has done any historical research would know that there were some very questionable ways in which universities have been dictated to by the back door rather than through the front door, and that many staffs, many of the public, and indeed the students and people who were interested in academic freedom, would have loved, over the years, to have access to certain documents to find out exactly where the directives were coming from and why certain major changes took place, in such things as continuing education at the University of Toronto, for no apparent reason other than the fact that it hurt the sensitivities of the then Conservative government.

What my colleague may be arguing for is actually more freedom of the universities through a more open system, a system in which we would all know where the decisions were being made

and why they were being made. In fact, this may be an argument for more freedom rather than the kinds of things which, historically, have gone on under the previous Conservative governments and hopefully will not go on under the present Liberal government.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I have nothing to add. I am grateful to the honourable members for their useful comments. We are opposed, for the reasons I gave, to the inclusion of the amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes has moved the amendment to subsection 2(1) of the bill. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Ms. Gigantes: I will withdraw the amendment which is attached to the first amendment, which is numbered subsection 2(3).

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Since that one is withdrawn, I have no record of any other amendments until we get to new section 10a.

Section 2 agreed to.

Sections 3 to 10, inclusive, agreed to.

Mr. Sterling: This amendment, along with the amendment I am proposing to section 68, relates to a special kind of access, which I would like to see available.

Mr. Chairman: You should move the amendment.

Mr. Sterling: I am sorry. Having served notice on all the members who have participated in the debate, I assumed that the motion would have been known by everybody. Perhaps I should enter it on the record.

1550

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Sterling moves that the bill be amended by adding thereto the following section:

"10a(1) Every member of the Legislature has a right of access on a continuing basis, as described in this section, to information from records or parts of records in the custody or under the control of an institution, unless the records or parts of the records fall within one of the exemptions under sections 12 to 22.

"(2) Every member of the Legislature may make a request in writing to an institution asking that the institution provide him or her with information from records or parts of records on a continuing basis.

"(3) The member shall specify particular records or describe categories of records to which the request applies and may specify the form in which the information is to be provided.

"(4) The institution shall provide the member with the information, in the form he or she specifies, unless the cost of doing so would be excessive.

"(5) The institution shall provide the member with regular updates of the information, within a reasonable time of itself receiving the new information.

"(6) Despite section 57, the member shall not be charged for the information.

"(7) Sections 24 to 29 apply, with necessary modifications, in respect of the member's request."

Mr. Sterling: This section and section 68 are sections which perhaps innovate on the principle of access to information. Under present access to information laws or freedom of information acts across our country, the trigger mechanism for information to come forward is a request for a document or a record and a reply in response to that particular request.

As a member of the Legislature, I find there are many times when the continuity of a number of records is important in determining or evaluating the government's performance in a particular policy area or a program area. Under this amendment to the freedom of information act, a member of the Legislature would be given special access to government records.

This special access would permit a legislator to request, on a continuing basis, a classification of records that he or she expects will come into the hands of the government over a period of time in the future. It will do away with the necessity of a member's having to continue to ask for a record time after time if he wants to compare data over a chronological period of time.

Under this amendment as well, the member will be permitted to ask a ministry or an institution to present the data in some form or manner in which he can use them to call into account the particular program. I know the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) will be most pleased to provide me with that kind of data with regard to capital expenditures across the province. I can imagine the kind of format I would like to put forward to him in terms of dealing with the kind of information I would like.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Just ask me.

Mr. Sterling: I take it that is an invitation by the minister to just ask him, and I will.

This particular amendment has a limitation upon it. It would limit the responsibility of an institution so that costs would not become too great in providing the information, if it was prohibitive to provide that information in the form the member required. I believe the amendment is forward-looking in that, as time goes on, more and more information will be recorded electronically or in computers. Therefore, the provision of data in a particular form should not be too onerous for the government institution to provide, if the software for a particular computer program can be altered to spew out that information in the form a particular member requests.

The idea for this kind of amendment comes forward from my experience in talking to many legislators in the United States. Under their particular system of government, members of the two elected bodies in each state, the Senate and the House of Representatives, have the opportunity to have programs that are put forward evaluated on a regular basis. Sometimes that evaluation is in the form of statistical data and sometimes it is put forward in the form of consultants' advice after interviewing various people.

The kind of data we are asking for here is not an evaluation but a putting together of information in a manageable form so that a government program can be called into accountability.

Mr. Chairman, you will see from my amendment to section 68 that I would like the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to be empowered by this legislation to call in members of a government institution to examine the different ways a government institution is collecting and collating information for existing programs and proposed programs.

I think the present situation has gone on too long, with regard to the former government and the present government, in terms of the evaluation of various programs government enters into. I believe when a government program is set up, there should be evaluation criteria put forward. I want the Legislative Assembly committee to have the power to call forward people who are knowledgeable in the area to set down a fair evaluation methodology so that in a year or two years from the time of a program being announced, members of this Legislature and the public in general would have some knowledge as to whether that program was succeeding or failing.

As I say, it is a different amendment. This amendment was not proposed during committee

hearings. I hope some of the members will consider it a new and innovative method, not only of gaining access to a particular record, but gaining access to a bunch of records or a group of records in a readable and manageable form. More information may or may not be available under this particular piece of legislation, but as important as the right to information may be, it is also important to get it in a form in which it can be used. I believe with the advent of the collection of a great amount of data in electronic memory devices, this kind of section is not impractical in its implication or when put into practice.

I would ask members to consider this and give it their support.

1600

Hon. Mr. Scott: I have just had the opportunity in the last few moments to look at the amendment to section 10a—which will become section 10a, if passed—that my honourable friend proposes. I propose to deal with it and not with the amendment he will be making with respect to section 64.

Let me begin by saying that the intent of the section is, generally speaking, a praiseworthy one, to ensure that members of the Legislature get access to information in order to do their work as representatives of their constituents and the general public.

I add, however, that without section 10a, members of this Legislature will be citizens entitled to apply in respect of the release of any document that is not prohibited by the terms of the act, so this amendment is not going to increase the amount of information honourable members are entitled to get. If it did increase it, in my respectful view, it would be something we would want to look at very seriously to see whether under this amendment they would be getting information they were deprived of under another section. That is not the case. What this does is create a process by which they will get that information. In my respectful view, it presents a number of difficulties, one not so serious but two quite serious.

The first difficulty is that it speaks to "information," when the act is carefully tuned throughout to speak to "record." This is perhaps a technical matter, but it is an important technical matter. I think this is the only section that speaks to getting information, whereas the other ones speak to getting records. In other words, what is examined in the other cases, the normal cases, is records. Here, the persons examining documents will have to be examining them from another point of view, the point of view of information. It

may be seen that this is a relatively technical objection. I would not regard it as overwhelming if it stood by itself.

The second objection, much more difficult, is that this act is founded on the proposition that if you request information, no matter how general your request is, the custodian of the information has to respond, either giving it to you or refusing it. That response is critical in the process, because that is what triggers the appeal. It is the response within the 30-day time frame that tells you: "They have it, but they will not give it to me. I am going to appeal." You can thereafter invoke the independent appeal mechanisms in the act before the commissioner and go to court, if necessary.

The trouble with this scheme—which will allow each member of the Legislature, perhaps on day one when he is sworn in, to put in a written request for all law enforcement information for the province arriving in the Ministry of the Attorney General east of Kingston—is that you will never get notice of a refusal. You will simply be shipped buckets of paper and you will never know that case when the ministry has made a decision, "Yes, we have some information, but we are going to reject your request." That being so, you will never be able to initiate the independent appeal.

To me, that is a fundamental flaw, because the perception will perhaps become the reality. You will think you are getting everything, but you will never know whether you are. You will never be able to appeal to assess whether what has been withheld from you has been rejected. If you wanted to appeal, you would have to do what you can now do, which is request a record, have the request rejected and then appeal to the commissioner.

The second difficulty here is, because it does not invoke a request and a refusal, the mechanisms of the statute, which are so critical to its working, will simply not be available to support it.

The third—and I must say from a narrow point of view, quite an overwhelming difficulty—is the work load that is going to be increased by this amendment. If every member of the Legislature put in a general request at every ministry at the beginning of each session or following his election, we would have, let us say, 100 individual requests for all information coming to the ministry within very broad categories.

I myself, representing a part of downtown Toronto, would want to ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr.

Kwinter) to let me have information that comes in to him: all records containing information that come to him for the whole of Metropolitan Toronto east of Yonge Street that are not prohibited by law from release. My friend the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) would request all the material west of Yonge Street, and there would be at least two people in that bureaucracy who would be looking at every record coming in to see if the member for Etobicoke or I were going to get it, and if we were not going to get it, why not?

It would create an enormous work load, because the member for Toronto-Woodbine might want all records that are received from all Metropolitan Toronto or all Ontario south of Barrie.

Certainly, the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) would want all records of Consumer and Commercial and Financial Institutions that come in that relate to insurance, from whatever part of the province they come, because that is a special interest of his. There would have to be someone in the minister's ministry who would look at all records coming in to determine if the information could be withheld or should be delivered.

If it were delivered, what would happen is that members would receive boxes and boxes of material, 99 per cent of which most members would not have any interest in. You may say that is never going to happen and, of course, it is not, because honourable members are reasonable and will exercise restraint.

It seems to me that the appropriate thing to do is to allow the kind of restraint that has been typical around here to continue to act. Honourable members will have the right to ask for what they need, and the member for Welland-Thorold will make the kinds of requests we know and expect of him, which will focus on the issue to which he wants to direct himself.

Those who are interested in mining accidents will not ask for all information about mines but will make requests about the particular mines with which they are concerned or about which they have inquiries. So the third objection is that the section is so broad it runs the risk that the ministry will have to vastly increase its resources even to run it.

The last point I would make is that we are going to have a three-year review period under this act in which the committee charged with the bill will be looking at how it works. I would earnestly implore honourable members, before they make what is a fairly fundamental change in

the act, to consider letting the committee have charge of it and react to it in the three-year review process. If it does not work, just as if universities do not take their responsibilities seriously, in that three-year period we will have an opportunity to build an amendment like this or an appropriate one that will actually respond to any real needs that develop.

Ms. Bryden: On a point of information, Mr. Chairman: I would like to inform the Attorney General that Toronto-Woodbine was a riding which died at the redistribution before the last one, and my husband Ken Bryden had the honour to represent it.

Ms. Gigantes: I think the Attorney General has indulged in his usual kind of—

Mr. Mackenzie: Polemic.

Ms. Gigantes: My colleague suggests “polemic,” but I would call it the overkill syndrome. It is taking out some kind of huge sledgehammer to kill a little ant, a fly or something.

The amendment that is before us does raise one interesting question. I believe most of the purpose of the amendment probably is met by the legislation. If I understand the amendment correctly, what is being proposed is that members of this Legislature have the right to gain access to records which are on computer tape and which can be read off in a form that may be of interest to a particular member.

I believe, if this legislation is working properly, any member of the public should be able to get that kind of information. We will have to review and see just how much information of that kind is being provided to people in the public—and indeed, members of the Legislature are members of the public—after our three-year review period.

1610

However, the one question raised by this amendment that I now wish we had had a chance to debate while we were going through discussion in the Legislative Assembly committee, and perhaps the Attorney General can make some comment on it right now, was the question of continuous provision of information. Can the Attorney General indicate to us where in the legislation itself or in some regulation he would expect to provide for it if somebody, for a professional or personal reason, has an interest in having an ongoing flow of information from one of the agencies covered by this legislation? Will that be something we can expect to happen under this legislation?

For example, if a newspaper makes one application for access to information in an area of particular interest to the newspaper or to one of the people who work at the newspaper and would like to continue that flow of information over a period of time, as suggested by the proposer of this motion, does the Attorney General expect that to happen? Obviously, here in the Legislature what we can do is simply table the same question every session or call up and say: “I am just going to pull out another access-to-information request. Why do you not give it to me?” For other members of the public, it may not be that easy.

Should we be able to expect, under this legislation, that someone who requests it would be able to expect one application to cover an ongoing flow of information on a particular subject?

Hon. Mr. Scott: The answer to the member’s question is probably yes. As the routine users of the process become known, it is conceivable and indeed highly likely that one of them will say to my ministry: “You know I am interested in this and I will make requests every month. Will you please collate the information as it comes in and pass it along and I will drop by and make the formal requests at the appropriate interval?”

I regard it as inevitable that this kind of negotiated arrangement to get information will occur: first, because it is convenient for the citizen as the honourable member has noted; and second, because in a way it is very convenient for the ministry to say: “We are going to be asked for that. Let us peel it off as it comes in and pile it up.” I think that is going to happen.

What really troubles me is very generalized requests—it might be overkill even to refer to them so I am very hesitant—that ask for such a broadly expanded territory that it would not be possible for the ministry to say yes. But I think in narrower areas where the requester is a person who routinely wants information of a specified type, it will inevitably be possible for the ministry to develop a system so that this is forthcoming, so that you do not have to go down there except at intervals to fill in the appropriate covering request.

Ms. Gigantes: I would like to pursue with the minister what he is saying to us because I am aware of at least one case asking for an update of the annual statistics on wiretapping in Ontario that apparently had not been responded to. I do not know whether the minister is aware of it but he certainly should be aware because I have received copies of the applicant’s letter, several

letters in fact stretched over a period of months. The applicant receives that material for one year, makes an application for the next year, waits for months, writes another letter, waits for months, writes another letter, does not even receive an acknowledgement over a period of many, many months; and then finally, I guess, the information is released.

Under this legislation, how does one make sure this kind of thing is not happening and we are not putting somebody who has a perfectly legitimate reason for wanting to have a continuing flow of information in a specific area through an access-to-information application every year? Can we expect regulations that will do this? The minister has not pointed out anything in this legislation that will provide us with that.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The answer to the honourable member's question is that the act contemplates a request and an answer within time limits. In that process, or in the appeal process therefrom, you establish your entitlement to the information and the fact that it is not protected from disclosure. Once that has been done, either by agreement because there is no doubt about it or by the inquiry process if there is a dispute about it, and the citizen's entitlement to the information is established, whether it be information about a wiretap or information about something else, then all the succeeding applications are pro forma. They would only require the repetition of that exercise.

I am quite confident that if there is no doubt about the entitlement or if the doubt has been put aside by the commissioner's determination, systems will develop that will assure a free flow of that information. It will not be in the interests of anybody to do anything else because the point will already have been litigated or determined by the commission.

Mr. Sterling: I would just like to reply and say that I am happy the Attorney General agrees with the general principle. There are two prongs to the principle, one of which is continuing information of the same nature and the same kind that projects into the future. The other prong, which is very important, is giving or directing in some way a correlation of information that can be used to call a government into accountability. That is, of course, what the Williams report was all about and that is what freedom of information is supposed to be all about, accountability of government to the people.

My reluctance to widen section 10a as I have proposed to the general public is the bogymen that the Attorney General has held up in terms of

the cost. However, the cost, and I put a limitation on it, would be limited. Where it would be excessive, you cannot have it. In other words, to invite an application for all information east of Belleville, as the minister has said, is ludicrous in terms of the number of boxes, etc. That would be deemed to be excessive in cost.

Members at the present time, by placing a question in Orders and Notices, can incur extreme cost for the government in answering those questions going back in time. What I am trying to do is eliminate that kind of cost by saying to the minister, "We are going to require this kind of information, so set up your computers so you can put out this information in a meaningful manner to the particular member who is requesting the particular information."

On the whole matter of speaking to records rather than information, I thought the act was to deal not with freedom to view records but with freedom of information. At any rate, that argument is not the key to the minister's objection.

The other thing in terms of what would trigger the appeal, the trigger would be the stop in the flow of information or the inadequacy of the information. If a member requested information or data and he was not given that information, he would make an appeal; if he were given the information and the flow stopped, he would make an appeal; or if the flow were too slow, he would make an appeal. Therefore, I believe that under the present act with the present wording of this particular section, it would work. I do not believe the cost would be excessive because of the limitation on the right of a member to request the information.

Lastly, the Attorney General makes the appeal that we wait for three years for the review. If we are going to have a review and the costs are excessive or are deemed to be excessive, then why not bring it up at that time and take it out? I believe that this amendment, as I say, not only will provide more information to members but also, more important, will provide it in a fashion, in a manner and in a form in which the members can use it to call the government into accountability. That is what this act is all about.

1620

Mr. Chairman: Does any other honourable member wish to comment upon this amendment by Mr. Sterling?

There being none, shall Mr. Sterling's amendment, which is the addition of a new section 10a, carry?

Mr. Chairman: The chair is not a mind reader. I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Mr. Scott: Someone said no; I did not.

Mr. Chairman: There was no "no." This is the second time I have asked for a vote. I heard none before. I waited this time. Again, I waited. I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: The next amendment I have is to section 23.

Ms. Gigantes moves that section 23 of the bill, as reprinted as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee, be amended by inserting after "sections" in the first and second lines "12."

Before the member carries on, may we carry the sections up to 23?

Shall section 10, as amended, stand as part of the bill?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

I am sorry. The chair is in error. I had already carried section 10. This was a new section 10a, a new additional section.

Ms. Gigantes: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: If the chair can make an error, I wonder whether the chair can recognize that an error was made by some members of this Legislature in not speaking when you called for those in favour of passing section 10a or the amendment to section 10a, as proposed by our Conservative colleague. In other words, I am asking whether you will be kind enough, given the state of flux that now seems to have developed about where we are in the bill, to allow us one more time to voice our opinion on section 10a, so that we will not have to drag this out over several days.

Mr. Chairman: No, I see the member for Carleton-Grenville nodding in the negative. I will put it on the record, however. Is there unanimous consent to revert to the vote on Mr. Sterling's motion?

Mr. Sterling: No.

Mr. Chairman: I hear "no," so it is not unanimous. I am sorry. Even though the chair did make an error, that does not go back to correct a second error.

Shall sections 11 to 22, inclusive, of the bill stand as part of the bill?

Section 11 to 22, inclusive, agreed to.

On section 23:

Mr. Chairman: Comments on section 23, the member for Ottawa East.

Ms. Gigantes: Ottawa Centre, Mr. Chairman.

We added a new section 23 to the bill. Just as a brief explanation to members of the Legislature, in considering the bill and the many areas of exemption and exception that are provided on matters of access to information, the Legislative Assembly committee determined that it would be useful to provide that the commissioner could review whether an exemption should be granted under those several sections, sections 12, 13, 14, 15 and up to section 22, on the basis that the commissioner determined that in spite of the fact that access to information would not be provided under the legislation in the normal course of events, because of one of those many exemption areas, the commissioner also determined that an exception would be made to that exemption provision because it was in the public interest to do so.

I will read how the committee framed that section. We added:

"23. An exemption from disclosure of a record under sections"—which are enumerated—"does not apply where a compelling public interest in the disclosure of the record clearly outweighs the purpose of the exemption."

That section 23, which gives the commissioner a rare override on exemption areas in the legislation and which would provide the commissioner in extraordinary cases with the power to order the release of information that otherwise would have been exempt from the provisions of this bill, is one that in my view should be extended to all the exemption sections we have, sections 12 through 22.

The motion I am putting at this time adds section 12 to the coverage provided by section 23, and on matters determined to be cabinet documents, about which governments are always very touchy and which are very broadly defined in this legislation, would have the effect of allowing the commissioner to say, "In this very compelling case of public interest, even though cabinet documents are in general exempt from application for freedom of information access, I am going to rule that the information being sought by the applicant should be released because there is a compelling public interest."

Without going into great historic lengths or into any grand imaginings about what kinds of materials might move a commissioner to make such a determination, let me just say we know that governments can withhold information under claims the Americans know as executive

privilege, known in Canada as cabinet documents, which prevents the public from finding out things that are indeed of a compelling public interest. This amendment would simply say that in those very few extraordinary cases, we would expect that under any responsible government the commissioner could make a determination that there was a compelling public interest for the release of cabinet documents.

Mr. Sterling: I think it is important for people to understand the review process or the person who makes the final decision as to whether the public interest would outweigh the formal rules contained in the exemption section 12 with regard to cabinet records. My reluctance to support this section, the addition of section 12, relates to the whole review process or the process in which the information commissioner has the final say as to what happens. Our party put forward amendments in committee whereby the decision of the information commissioner could be appealed to the courts, but that amendment was not supported by either the New Democratic Party or the Liberal Party. So within this act, Bill 34, we have given the final say to one individual who is going to make a decision as to whether the information should or should not be released, and his or her word will be final.

My concern in that is that any one individual can be wrong, notwithstanding his or her ability. When you are dealing with the whole British parliamentary system, the whole argument with regard to cabinet solidarity and the position of the cabinet speaking as one voice is more important than giving this one individual the right to second-guess the technical provisions of section 12.

Under the exemption section, it should be understood that one can get records of the cabinet under certain circumstances. In relation to the discussions that took place, most of the records or the minutes of that particular cabinet meeting will not be available, and I do not think they should be available; nor do I think an information commissioner should have the right to say, "There is a greater public interest, in my personal opinion, in this particular matter," and overrule the technical rules that protect cabinet secrecy. Therefore, our party cannot support this particular amendment.

1630

Hon. Mr. Scott: I am heartened by the support of the member for Carleton-Grenville for opposition to this proposal, which I think he expressed in committee as well. I agree with him, for slightly different reasons, that it would be

inappropriate in the circumstances of this case to give the commissioner—who after all is an official, though admittedly an official of high independence and authority—the right to supersede the legislation in effect, as this amendment and others like it will permit him to do, by his own judgement about what is a compelling public interest.

There are certain areas in which I think that can be justified, and we have tried to take account of them in the bill as it went through committee, but it could be said that it is extremely difficult to exercise that kind of power when you come to this, to law enforcement and to a number of other provisions.

The government will join with the honourable member in opposing the amendment that is proposed.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Ms. Gigantes's amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that section 23 of the bill, as reprinted as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee, be amended by inserting, after "13" in the second line, "14."

Ms. Gigantes: The purpose of this amendment is much akin to the one I presented a moment earlier, which went down to defeat; it is to provide that the commissioner have the power, in extraordinary circumstances, to order the release of records related to law enforcement in this case. Earlier we dealt with cabinet documents; here we are dealing with law enforcement.

Law enforcement takes up a fair amount of space in this bill in terms of the exclusions to information that members of the public and members of this Legislature can get about what is happening within the law enforcement system. In section 14, we have an exemption relating to law enforcement which goes on for more than a page and a half, and I am very tempted to read it all out just to remind members of the Legislature and any member of the public who is listening how extensive the exemption to freedom of information is under this bill when we get to law enforcement.

What we are asking for here is that the commissioner have, in extraordinary cases, the right to overrule a minister and a cabinet and to say there is a matter of such grave public interest here, of such "compelling public interest," in the

words of section 23, that he feels these records should be released.

We do not have to go far back in time or afield at all in this Legislature to recollect that there have been acts carried out by law enforcement agencies here in Ontario involving agencies responsible either directly or indirectly to the Attorney General which have created the utmost concern in the public about how law enforcement is carried on in this province. They have happened at the local level of law enforcement; they have happened at the provincial level of law enforcement; they have happened at the federal level of law enforcement, up to and including illegal acts by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police within Ontario, some of which have affected the party I represent in this Legislature. Perhaps the least of those, in terms of their effect—and their bad effect in this province—affected this party; and the worst of them affected individuals in very grievous ways and certainly threw into question the relationship of our law enforcement agencies and those other organizations that exist in a free and democratic society such as we have here in Ontario.

In my view, if ever there is a reason to have freedom of information in a democratic society, it is to make sure that such agencies as law enforcement agencies, defence agencies, security agencies and police agencies are subject to the control of the public. They cannot be subject to the control of the public unless the public has information about their activities.

The exemption provided in section 14 of the bill, which will prevent the public from getting information about law enforcement agencies and their behaviour, is very extensive. The proposal put forward in this amendment is a very limited one. It says that in extraordinary cases, when the commissioner decides there is compelling public interest, those exemptions shall be overridden by an order by the commissioner that records be released.

Mr. Sterling: As stated in committee, our party will not support this amendment.

I think it should be put forward clearly that there will be some law enforcement records available to people. That is what this bill does; it provides access to some information, and then there are some exclusions. What the public interest override does is take the technical part of the section—in other words, subsection 14(1) says: “A head may refuse to disclose a record where the disclosure could reasonably be expected to, (a) interfere with a law enforcement

matter.” Then there are a number of other clauses, a lot of other clauses.

Under the amendment put forward by the member for Ottawa Centre, the information commissioner could say, “In spite of the fact that releasing a record will interfere with a law enforcement matter, I am going to do it anyway.” The problem with the law enforcement area is that the person who is reading a particular piece of information is not necessarily attuned to all the ramifications of that piece of information if it is released to a particular person, because the information is often complex and intertwined with other kinds of information people have.

I would like to be able to support the amendment because of the concerns the member has, but there is a balance here between trying to run a justice system and giving police and our justice system a fair break in doing their job versus access to the information which they need in order to do their job.

I feel that section 14, which reads strangely similar to the same exemption section in that famous Bill 80, should be supported in this case.

Hon. Mr. Scott: For the reasons given by the member for Carleton-Grenville and for the reasons I gave in the committee, I would ask the House to oppose the amendment.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Ms. Gigantes's amendment will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

1640

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that section 23, as reprinted as amended by the Legislative Assembly committee, be amended by inserting, after “15” in the second line, “16.”

Ms. Gigantes: I think everybody is getting the hang of this now. The amendment we are concerned with right here is one that would allow section 23 to apply to exempted matters coming under the general heading of defence. The object here is the same as it was in the previous two motions. It would provide in extraordinary cases, or in the language of the bill cases of compelling public interest, to be determined by the commissioner, that defence matters which would ordinarily be exempt—not all defence matters will be exempt but let me suggest that most will—those defence matters where there was a compelling public interest for the disclosure of a record might be made accessible to the public by a determination of the commissioner.

Mr. Sterling: As in committee, our party cannot support the extension of this right for an individual to insert his own opinion as to what is in the interests of Canada in terms of information relating to the defence of our country. Section 16 reads:

"A head may refuse to disclose a record where the disclosure could reasonably be expected to prejudice the defence of Canada or of any foreign state allied or associated with Canada or be injurious to the detection, prevention or suppression of espionage, sabotage or terrorism and shall not disclose any such record without the prior approval of the executive council."

I do not think that kind of responsibility should be put on an appointed information commissioner who is independent of the people, not being elected. Therefore, we cannot support this particular amendment put forward by the member for Ottawa Centre.

Hon. Mr. Scott: For the reasons given in the committee and so ably given by the member for Carleton-Grenville, I agree that this motion should be rejected. I have a feeling he is on a lucky ride here; he may make a mistake just minutes away.

Ms. Gigantes: If they just had the decency to get up and say, "No, we oppose this" I would not get so annoyed. It is indefensible to listen to that kind of poppycock. It really is.

In section 16 we have no provision that the commissioner can decide there is a record which is of such compelling public interest that would fall under section 16 that he can order its release. Let me suggest that the section which the member for Carleton-Grenville just read out to us can cover a multitude of governmental sins. Furthermore, they are sins which governments have been known to commit. No one in this House can deny that. Under the heading of "prevention or suppression of espionage, sabotage or terrorism," governments can do anything; they have, and they will continue to.

The member for Carleton-Grenville talks about a person who is not responsible to the people because he is not elected. What we are talking about here is access to information which a government wants to hide. The government is being unopen in its relationship with the people it is supposed to represent, the people who gave it power. Let us say a person makes an application to find out something about the activities of the government under the great slogan of "defence" and "detection, prevention or suppression of espionage, sabotage or terrorism." Everybody cringes when those words are heard. I do not. I

think people in this province have a right to know, in that area as well as in other areas, whether its government is being responsible. It is precisely because the commissioner is independent of government that we want a commissioner in cases of compelling public interest to be able to order the release of the documents.

Hon. Mr. Scott: Before we get into calling each other guilty of poppycock or other things, I think one thing might be observed. The honourable member is dedicated to hearing the sound of her own voice. All these motions and all these amendments were made in the committee, and she made long speeches on all of them and was defeated on all of them. I made long speeches at the time too, and was I was defeated on some. I do not regard it, and I do not think other members regard it, as particularly useful to repeat all that to the same result.

If I make a short interjection saying, "For the reasons given by the honourable member, I am opposed to the amendment," I do not think in the circumstances it is appropriate to identify it as poppycock. At least I am not wasting everybody's time repeating everything twice for the record.

Mr. Harris: I oppose this amendment.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Ms. Gigantes's amendment to section 23, by inserting, after "15" in the second line, "16," will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that section 23 of the bill, as reprinted and as amended by the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, be amended by inserting, after "18" in the second line, "19."

Ms. Gigantes: This amendment would provide that the commissioner could in extraordinary circumstances decide that compelling public interest forced him to order the release of records which are currently exempted under section 19, and these records are called records subject to a solicitor-client privilege.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I do not want my honourable friend the member for Ottawa Centre to think I have reformed and am going to make a long speech on this, but this was an amendment on which the Conservative Party divided to defeat in the committee. I think it might be appropriate to make some observations about it so that everybody can come to his own judgement about what is right.

What is proposed in the bill is that records which are within the solicitor-client privilege should be exempt, and what is proposed in this amendment is that the commissioner, the single official the member for Carleton-Grenville has referred to, should be able to reverse that, compelling the production of solicitor-client information.

The difficulty with that is the nature of solicitor-client information. It is not a protection for a lawyer, as some may think; it is a protection for the client, who can go to a lawyer as one cannot even go to a confessor, really, and say, "I am going to tell you the whole story, on the understanding you cannot be sworn to produce it." That is done, of course, so that the average citizen can get legal advice.

What is proposed here is that that relationship should continue to be respected and that no information given to counsel to give his opinion on should on that account be released on a request for information.

It is the first case in the Commonwealth of which I am aware in which any attempt has been made by an amendment like this to breach solicitor-client privilege. For that reason I am opposed to it, and ask the House to reject the proposal.

1650

Mr. Sterling: During the committee hearing, we made several attempts at amending this particular section. The problem with the solicitor-client relationship is that people will relate it to perhaps only one specific instance of the relationship of solicitor together with client.

My particular problem with supporting this amendment is that I would support it for certain kinds of solicitor-client relationship but not for solicitor-client relationship in every case. Therefore, the form in which the amendment is placed would not meet with my approval or, I believe, my party's approval at this time, so we will not support the amendment.

Ms. Gigantes: This amendment is being discussed as if it affected a person in the public who went to a lawyer for advice. The amendment has nothing at all to do with that subject matter.

We are talking here about government lawyers; we are talking about governments getting legal advice. This bill has to do with information held by the government of Ontario, and it is in that context that we are discussing the solicitor-client relationship.

We are not dealing at all with Mr. X, who has to go to see a lawyer and the invasion of that very private relationship out there in the private field

of lawyer-client relationships. We are talking about whether there may be some compelling cases, and in fact the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) will know that courts in Ontario can be in a position to decide that documents should be reviewed—whether they are cabinet documents—or they may be reviewed even if they affect a solicitor-client relationship; they may be reviewed even if they affect a matter of defence; they may be reviewed for any number of reasons. I am sure there will be cases which will arise from time to time where a court will determine whether somebody should look at some records to see if, in a particular case, one of these sacrosanct areas should be invaded by access to records.

All I am suggesting here is that a commissioner would have the right to review cases where there might be a compelling public interest and determine whether, in a few cases, there is a compelling public interest for a breach of this famous relationship—this holy-of-holy relationship—and remember that here the solicitor, or the client, is the government.

Mr. Harris: We are obviously in a very difficult area here, and as reluctant as I am to go along with the two learned opinions of two lawyers as opposed to the opinion of a layperson, which I am much more prone to want to accept in all of these matters, I will have to go along with the arguments put forward by the member for Carleton-Grenville.

Mr. Chairman: Shall this amendment of Ms. Gigantes to section 23 of the bill carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sterling moves that section 23 of the bill be amended by striking out "20 and 21" in the second line and inserting in lieu thereof "and 20."

Mr. Sterling: Originally, in the committee, I put forward an amendment which excluded section 21 from the public interest override. Section 21 of the bill is the exemption which deals with personal information, personal privacy.

My feeling, I guess in very basic terms, is that if a person deals with the government of Ontario and is told, in law, that the information it provides will be kept confidential, then I do not think anyone should have the right to override that particular promise to that individual. That is, in effect, what this does.

Our province has over 100 statutes with confidentiality provisions in them, which the Legislative Assembly is going to consider over the next two years. If the province or the government of the day decides not to amend those particular acts to opt them out of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, then this act supersedes the confidentiality provisions of those other statutes.

Those other statutes may have all kinds of special circumstances associated with information: medical information; information relating to tests that have been taken about individuals; all kinds of other information. I do not have the faith that this Legislature is going to amend all 110 acts or whatever number of acts there are dealing with confidentiality and dealing with personal privacy over the next two years.

That means that a person, in good faith, looking at a statute in the Revised Statutes of Ontario or any other statute book relating to Ontario statutes, could say, "I am giving information to an institution of the government of Ontario and I expect it to be kept confidential," not knowing that some other individual under section 21 can apply to that institution and ask for that information about that person or any other citizen.

If the head of the government refuses to give that information, the individual applying for that information could go to the privacy commissioner or the information commissioner and he could put forward his technical arguments about the section. Even though the technical arguments may exclude the person getting hold of that record, the final argument that the applicant can put forward about getting information about another person is that it is in the greater public interest that he has the person's health record or he has some information that the person has given on good faith to this government—that the public interest overrides. One person can decide that public interest overrides, notwithstanding all the promises another person has received.

Therefore, I do not think it is appropriate in this particular section for those basic reasons. Second, it does not fit into the wording of this section. Under clause 21(1)(f) in particular, it says a head shall refuse to disclose information if it is an unjustified invasion of personal privacy.

If a head refused to give an applicant information about another individual and said, "This is an unjustified invasion of personal privacy," and the applicant did not agree with that, he could go to the information commissioner. If the information commissioner, reviewing

the circumstances, said, "Yes, it is an unjustified invasion of personal privacy," then he could say, even though he found and agreed with the head that it was an unjustified invasion of personal privacy, that the public interest overrides.

He could say: "It does not matter what we promised to this individual, what either a bureaucrat has promised to this individual or what it said in law, I am going to let the public interest be there. There is a greater public interest, in my humble opinion"—although it would not be very humble under those circumstances—"and I am going to release that information about you to somebody else."

That is why I want this particular section taken out of this public interest override.

1700

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sterling has moved an amendment to section 23, striking out the words "20 and 21" and inserting in lieu thereof "and 20."

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: Before the next amendment, which is to section 59, shall sections 23 to 58, inclusive, stand as part of the bill?

Sections 23 to 58, inclusive, agreed to.

On section 59:

Mr. Sterling: I have two amendments to section 59.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sterling moves that section 59 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following clause:

"(aa) undertake audits of institutions to assess the extent to which they are complying with this act."

Mr. Sterling: Under section 59, we have the powers of the information commissioner and what the commissioner may do once he gets into his job. I introduce this amendment at this particular time and did not introduce it during the committee hearings because we came across this section prior to my having an opportunity to read the report of the standing committee on justice and Solicitor General in the federal House.

As members may remember, we were considering this bill just about the time this report came out. One of the recommendations of the Thacker report was that both of these powers be added to the powers of their information and privacy commissioners, as they have two under federal law.

Therefore, I am moving that in addition to the other mandate he now has under the bill, the commissioner be given the mandate that he can look at an institution and he can look at a government corporation and make certain they are trying to comply with this act. He or she can report on whether or not they are trying to live within this act and live to the letter of the act.

Ms. Gigantes: I would like to ask the member for Carleton-Grenville how his amendment differs from clause 58(2)(b). Subsection 58(1) says the commissioner is going to make an annual report to the Speaker. Subsection 2 says the report "shall provide a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of this act in providing access to information and protection of personal privacy."

There is the answer to my question. Clause 58(2)(b) says "an assessment of the extent to which institutions are complying with this act." If I am answering my own question correctly, then section 58 deals only with—no, it should be exactly the same. It is exactly the same as I read it, Mr. Chairman; clause 58(2)(b).

Mr. Breagh: There seems to be a bit of a procedural problem here. We have an amendment proposed by the member for Carleton-Grenville which does add some words, but I have studied it briefly here this afternoon. It is the first opportunity I have had to see this particular amendment. I fail to see that it alters in any substantive way what is already in the bill. I am going to seek a little clarification from the member as to exactly what difference this would make to anybody and then I am going to ask the chair to give us a ruling on how sensible it is to amend a bill in a way that does nothing but add words and changes nothing in substance in the bill.

Mr. Sterling: On reflection, I have had an opportunity to re-read subsection 58(2). I was under the impression that dealt solely with the protection of personal privacy; therefore, I withdraw my amendment seeing that it also includes access to information.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sterling moves that section 59 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following clause:

"(da) may conduct public education programs and provide information concerning this act and the commissioner's role and activities."

Mr. Sterling: Again, referring to the federal situation, there seems to have been some confusion or lack of authority both for the privacy commissioner and the information com-

missioner to undertake public education programs. The feeling of the Thacker committee was that, while they have had a federal freedom of information act and a Privacy Act, there should be some additional mandate clearly spelled out in the law that the information commissioner can educate the public as to how to get access to government documents and how to seek the protection of the privacy provisions under this act.

Motion agreed to.

Section 59, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 60 to 67, inclusive, agreed to.

On section 68:

Mr. Sterling: Earlier we passed a section dealing with the right of a member to seek information on a continuing basis from the government and in a form that he or she, as a member of this Legislature, deems reasonable.

Under section 68a, there is a mandate given to our standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, which was also given other mandates under this act, to review the methods of gathering and presenting information by this government and with the mandate to make recommendations concerning those methods.

The particular purpose of putting this into legislation is to give a member of the Legislature more leverage in asking a standing committee of the Legislative Assembly to undertake a review in the case of a situation where we may not be in a minority government position. Rather than by allowing the Legislative Assembly committee either to do this or not to do this, I thought it was in some ways consistent with the thrust of the act to put in the fact that it is going to review acts dealing with confidentiality provisions of the various legislative acts that are already in place in this province, the some 100 that I mentioned before, and also in terms of doing our three-year review.

It is just a matter of basically giving the member more leverage in dealing with the standing committee, should we ever get into a majority parliament situation when the committee would be controlled by government members.

1710

Hon. Mr. Scott: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one or two comments about the proposed section 68a and then ask you whether it is appropriate to determine whether it is in order or not.

Members will see that section 68 of the bill provides, "The standing committee on the

Legislative Assembly shall, within three years... undertake a comprehensive review of this act" and thereafter "make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly regarding amendments to this act."

The legislative committee's function, appropriately, is to look at the act, to look at the way it works and to make recommendations about how it can be improved. Grafted to that is this proposal which has nothing to do with information and nothing to do with the act or any other section of the act.

What it does is to permit the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to review methods of gathering and presenting information—and that is the last time you will hear the word "information" used—but it is not information such as you get from records; it is information about the operation of government programs. In other words, the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly is going to be some kind of roving committee to obtain information about government programs and to make recommendations about how they may best be evaluated—

Mr. Breaugh: You have just driven me on side.

Hon. Mr. Scott: No one will be better suited for chairmanship of this roving Star Chamber than the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh).

It looks not only at the operation of government programs but also at their evaluation. It looks at them and evaluates them. Then, as if that is not wide-ranging enough—and there will be no American congressional committee that will have broader powers than this—it goes on in subsection 2 to say "the committee may require the administrator of a government program"—not the minister, not anybody else who has political responsibility, but some head of a government program, some deputy, assistant deputy or staff member—to come forward to provide information about the program. In other words, the chairman of the legislative committee and his committee not only evaluate the programs but also call in the bureaucrats to ask them to evaluate the programs.

It is my submission that this is not integral. It is not even a pretended part of the freedom of information act and should be ruled out of order. If it is not ruled out of order, it should be opposed by the House.

Mr. Breaugh: Briefly, speaking to the procedural point the Attorney General has raised, oddly enough, I think he might be correct on this.

I appreciate the intent, but I would argue that the legislative committee has all of these powers now and it is not necessary to specify them in this bill. For example, as the one who currently and temporarily chairs this committee, I would argue that the committee now has the right to order its own business. The committee has been given a proper order in legislative form to conduct a review, and it will conduct that review as it sees fit. If it chooses to audit, to investigate, to compare, to call before it witnesses, to do all those things, it is quite clear to me that it has those powers because we use them fairly regularly around here.

I would argue that, although in principle I understand what the member is trying to say, the amendment is both unnecessary and procedurally incorrect. I do not believe the House should be telling its committees what to do, how to do it and whom to call in front of them. That is the committees' job to do. The Legislature's task is to accept or reject that part of this legislation which says the review will be conducted by a committee of the House and it will be the Legislative Assembly committee.

Past that point, the House should let its committee do its job. It has, I believe, sufficient jurisdiction to call witnesses before it—as it did, for example, in processing this bill—to conduct examinations of how other jurisdictions do that, and we just finished doing that whole exercise. We have an ability to monitor how other jurisdictions do that, and we will have an ability to monitor how Ontario does that.

The member is offering to give to the committee something it already has. We thank him for his kindness and his good intent, but I do not believe we need it and I do not believe it is procedurally correct to put the amendment in this form.

When you make the ruling, Mr. Chairman, I will be interested in how you establish that the House orders a committee, when we have constantly over the years fought for the basic principle that the committee orders its own business, thank you very much. The House may give us a task to do and then it will be the job of the members of that committee to decide how best to carry out that task.

Mr. Chairman: Does the member for Carleton-Grenville have any comments on the comments of the Attorney General that the amendment is out of order as being too broad?

Mr. Sterling: Since we did pass section 10a, which relates to the rights of members to seek information in certain kinds of forms or in certain

kinds of formats, I thought that in order for a member to have an intelligent approach in terms of the format he might want to get the information in, the logical approach—and I am sorry that I am thinking more like an engineer than a lawyer today—would be to go and get the person who is running a government program, preferably when he is setting up the program, call that person in and say, “How best can we as a Legislature evaluate what this program is going to do in the future?”

That was my motive behind putting in section 68 in terms of saying that a member who was interested in a particular new program that the government announced could go down to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and say, “I want to get the guy or the woman who is running this shop to come into the Legislative Assembly committee so that I can ask this person how we can evaluate this in two to three years in order to determine whether the program is a success or is not a success.” That is how I relayed it to the Legislature.

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me for interrupting. I think the Attorney General is perhaps taking the position that the wording in subsection 68a(1), the fourth line, “operation of government programs,” is too wide.

Hon. Mr. Scott: That was my objection.

Mr. Chairman: He is not discussing the merits that the member is. Am I interpreting the Attorney General’s objections correctly that “government programs” is going beyond the scope of this information and privacy bill?

Mr. Sterling: I do not know why he would be objecting to reviewing the methods of gathering and presenting information about government programs. I do not understand that.

Ms. Gigantes: That is PR.

Mr. Sterling: That is public relations, I guess.

Mr. Breaugh: He used to understand it very well.

Hon. Mr. Scott: He used to understand it perfectly.

Mr. Sterling: I am in a position where I do not understand it today.

I do not think this legislation is going to rise or fall on this particular amendment, but I think it would give good direction to a member in terms of what he can do or what he cannot do with regard to the Legislative Assembly committee. The member for Oshawa, who is the chairman, knows what the Legislative Assembly committee can or cannot do. A lot of the members of this Legislature who have not had experience in that

particular committee do not know what the Legislative Assembly committee can do.

I just thought that if we are going to evaluate programs in a fair manner, we should allow the bureaucrats to have their say in front of a committee so that the committee could look at it and say, “What is fairer in how to evaluate this or how not to evaluate this particular program?” Otherwise, you will get a member perhaps requiring a format that a bureaucrat would object to.

It was just a matter of being fair on my part to put this section in; fair to the government, I mean.

Mr. Chairman: Having heard all sides, I am going to rule that in this section I believe the words “of government programs” are beyond the scope of this act and are too broad; second, section 68 already takes care of the remainder of subsection 68a(1); and third, my ruling is that the Legislative Assembly committee already does have sufficient power, so that subsection 68a(2) is unnecessary.

Therefore, I guess that means Mr. Sterling’s amendment is out of order as worded.

1720

Mr. Sterling: Before you make a ruling, may I withdraw that amendment?

Mr. Chairman: Yes. Thank you. The amendment is withdrawn.

Mr. Sterling: Or did you want to make that ruling?

Mr. Chairman: No, that is fine. It is withdrawn. It does not exist.

Sections 68 to 71, inclusive, agreed to.

On section 72:

Mr. Sterling: The present section 72 of the bill—perhaps I will put the amendment forward, if I can find the amendment. I have stroked out some of the words that were in the original typed copy and shortened the amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sterling moves that section 72 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“This act comes into force on the first day of January 1988.”

Mr. Sterling: The present wording of section 72 says, “This act comes into force on a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor.”

My understanding is that when one says, “This act comes into force...by proclamation by the Lieutenant Governor,” what one is saying in effect is that the cabinet has control as to when

this act or parts of this act come into effect. If that is the case, then it is my understanding that this government, this cabinet, could proclaim all of it, none of it or part of it at any time in the future.

There have been significant amendments to this particular piece of legislation. I am referring to the amendment put forward by the member for Ottawa Centre to section 23, giving the public interest override to certain exemption sections. I have moved an amendment not as significant today, with regard to section 10a. There is a significant section that was added in committee by the support of both opposition parties dealing with clause 2(1)(b) relating to the definition of "institutions," which was further supported by subsection 2(3).

I would like to engage the Attorney General on his intentions as to when the freedom of information act is going to become law, and whether his intentions are to call this act in total or whether he is going to proclaim certain sections first and other sections at a later date or whatever. I do not want all of the good work of the committee and the people who have been working on this bill for over two years to go for naught.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The honourable member has asked my intentions. They are as follows.

I think we can do it faster than is contemplated by this amendment, which is why I ask the House to reject it. I undertake to let the representatives of the other parties know who our proposal is for commissioner because, as I understand it, it is appropriate that the commissioner be appointed on a joint address or at least with the agreement of the three parties in the Legislature. I may say at this interval that I would be grateful for any suggestions honourable members have as to who such a person would be. I would hope very much that we would be in a position to appoint that person by the end of June.

There is then the following problem. The person will have to locate himself at Toronto and establish his or her office. But if he is appointed by the end of June, I would very much hope the act might be proclaimed on September 1 or October 1, one of those dates. This is what I have in mind.

I can tell the House that fairly elaborate machinery already exists in government for the operation of the act. The ministries are getting conversant with the language and are developing procedures so that information can be controlled and dispensed in accordance with the act fairly quickly after its proclamation. Our instinct here is to move as quickly as we can to have a

commissioner in place, if possible, by the end of June or when the House rises, looking to a proclamation on September 1 or October 1.

I will candidly say to my honourable friend who asked the question that I have not formed any view that any section should not be proclaimed, with one exception, and that is the exception in section 10a, which was passed today. Frankly, I have very grave difficulty with that section, somewhat fortified by the fact that it was passed by mistake. I do not think, though I cannot judge, it would carry the votes of the House. It was passed because I neglected to say no when I should have said no. This is the first time that allegation has ever been made against me—

Mr. Breaugh: That is not the way we hear it.

Hon. Mr. Scott: —and perhaps the last.

Apart from section 10a, which causes major problems for the administration of the act from the government's point of view, it is not our present intention to exclude the proclamation of any other section at the same time. Just so there will be no doubt about it, I want to say that I do not exclude even the section that relates to municipalities. That is the position of the government on this issue, and I ask the assembly to reject this proposal.

Ms. Gigantes: Am I correct in thinking that if a piece of legislation passes in this House it must be proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor in order to become effective as legislation?

Interjection.

Ms. Gigantes: Then what is the point in writing in a date on which legislation becomes effective? All the government has to do is to ask the Lieutenant Governor to proclaim everything except the effective date. It does not make any difference whether we pass this or not. It is useful that we hear such encouraging words from the Attorney General about how quickly he intends to bring the act into effect. All we can do now is nag him.

Hon. Mr. Scott: As I understand it, a bill comes into force on proclamation, on royal assent or on a date contained in the bill. This would be a date contained in the bill, so the proclamation could not take place to bring the legislation into effect earlier, even by the device of trying to avoid proclamation of this section. It is the bill that will speak to the day it is effective, which is why I ask members to reject that section. I think we can do it faster than this section contemplates.

Mr. Breagh: I do not think we want to get into a procedural hassle at this stage over how the bill will be proclaimed or what form it might take. It seems to me the problem is resolved by a kind suggestion from the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), that if we have wording of this nature, a friendly amendment be taken that it be not later than the dates that are contained here.

If the Attorney General has given us his commitment that this will be, in his way of the calendar, early fall or mid-fall, the only hesitation I have is that I have watched the very same man give us lessons on early spring and late spring. It makes me just a little fearful that we would leave it quite that way.

If the Attorney General would be able to take a slightly different stand, if his intention could be accomplished by using wording that would say "not later than," it seems to me that would give him all the options he wants to get the commissioner in place and the program started prior to that date. It does not inhibit him whatsoever, and I think it is actually quite a reasonable thing.

The Legislature itself has been enchanted with this particular law now for the better part of two years. It might be a little unusual to put a date in the bill, in the legislation itself, but there are many of us who are concerned that we have spent a lot of time in committee on this bill. I know that certainly there have been rafts of civil servants who have even been drafting manuals on how the bill might be implemented. They are anxious to carry on the bill. They want to get it in place. I am simply questioning why the Attorney General is such a reluctant person at this date to accept an amendment which might say simply "not later than January 1988." It seems to me he should be able to live with that and that might resolve a long squabble here this afternoon.

1730

Hon. Mr. Scott: I would be happy to live with that, but for the problem presented by section 10a.

Mr. Sterling: The Legislature passed that.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I understand the Legislature passed it. It passed it when, I believe, there was not a majority to support it because I neglected to say no. We asked if it could be revisited, and the honourable member opposite said no.

Mr. Sterling: So what you are telling us is you are going to be arrogant and legislate by proclamation.

Hon. Mr. Scott: No, I am not going to be arrogant and do anything. All the arrogance in

the world is not going to get me through this particular situation. I can assure the member of that.

The point I am making is that we are perfectly prepared to take a not-less-than provision, which means that all the bill is proclaimed and effective on a given day. I have candidly said to the House there is only one section we would have some difficulty about proclaiming. There are a number of alternatives. The House could revisit that section if there is unanimous consent. If there is, I can tell the House I will agree to any not-less-than proposal. Legislative counsel tells me she needs five minutes to draft it up. So if the House would agree to revisit section 10a and take the feeling of the House on that section, I will then agree that we should have a not-less-than proclamation date.

Mr. Breagh: I do not mean to preclude debate here, but I seek unanimous consent from the House so that we could reconsider the amendment on section 10a. Just before the Chairman makes a ruling on that: I am one who was interested in this particular section; I was called away at a committee meeting; I did follow the proceedings. Since I have returned, I have been searching for those who voted in the majority to cause the amendment to carry. I cannot find them.

It is a bit unusual for us to seek unanimous consent but it is in order and that is what I am doing. I would like to seek unanimous consent now to reconsider the amendment put by the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) on section 10a.

Mr. Chairman: We have several problems, but may I say first—

[Failure of sound system]

Mr. Chairman: —Attorney General to correct what he thinks might be an injustice.

Second, we are in the middle of section 72 and we really cannot open up. Unless there is unanimous consent and the House wishes to set aside consideration of section 72 at this point and there is unanimous consent to revert to section 10-whatever, we cannot go back.

Mr. Breagh: But I asked for the required unanimous consent of the House. If I get it, fine, we will resolve the problem this afternoon. If I do not get it, there are other options open tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: The member for Oshawa is asking for unanimous consent of the House to set aside section 72 at this point and to revert to section 10a.

Mr. Breagh: That is right.

Mr. Chairman: Is there unanimous consent of the House?

Mr. Harris: There is no discussion allowed on that?

Mr. Chairman: Really, no. There is no debate. It is either going to be unanimous or it is not going to be unanimous. Is there unanimous consent? Let me hear.

I see one member saying no. There is not unanimous consent. Therefore, shall we carry on with section 72?

Mr. Harris: Are we on section 72 here?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Harris: I guess I was a little concerned that we were giving unanimous consent to go back on a section to resolve something that was going to happen in this section, which I am not sure is resolvable. Before I get into that game, I am not 100 per cent convinced that at some point in the deliberations on this bill, before this House rises on the 25th or the 18th or whenever it is, that there may not be an opportunity for the Attorney General to reconsider section 10.

There are mechanisms available and in fact it may very well be that if somebody sought it later today, at least there would be one less no, anyway; I cannot speak for everybody in the House. I do want to know, while we are on this section, whether an amendment is possible to section 72 that gives an either/or situation; whether that is going to be acceptable by the chair. If it is not, then there is no point in having the discussion about "let us do this on section 10" because if we cannot do that anyway, once we finish section 10 and get back to section 72, we are right back to where we started.

The Attorney General indicated that he thought that legislative counsel could draft something that would be in order, but Mr. Chairman, I hear you telling me, and I bring it up because I overheard the rumblings of the chair that perhaps nothing was going to be in order—

Mr. Breagh: Sounds to me as if we have to hang the chairman. We can resolve the problem the way they do it in Oxford county; the judge gives a wrong order and out he goes.

Mr. Harris: What I was going to propose was an amendment along these lines, and if you would allow me to suggest the intent to you, and you could tell me whether you think that is feasible, and that is that unless proclaimed sooner by the government, this act in its entirety comes into force on January 1, 1988. That type of amendment may not be exactly what legislative

counsel will advise, but I am sure that everybody understands the intent of what I am saying.

With respect, Mr. Attorney General, I believe that may in fact have the majority support of this assembly.

Mr. Chairman: At this point, without hearing from further people, it appears unprecedented that we would put in an amendment that the proclamation of a bill will be at an indefinite time. This is somewhat unprecedented. Also, it would apparently read that some amendment that might be proposed states that the act comes into force on a date to be named by the proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor but not later than a certain date which is putting a limitation upon the Lieutenant Governor which again is unprecedented.

So, if someone does put that amendment, then the chair will reserve decision until tomorrow on that question, whether that is in order or not, so that it would not be decided, in its entirety, today.

Hypothetically speaking, in case anyone were going to put such a motion.

Mr. Harris: Are you suggesting, then, that we stand this section down until tomorrow?

Mr. Chairman: No. If there is such an amendment made, that would be my ruling.

Mr. Breagh: This is a fun day in the chair, I can see that. You are saying that you will not make a ruling on an amendment until it gets put, and two minutes ago you were just saying that I had to seek unanimous consent to set aside the amendment that you are just talking about.

Now, it seems to me that the amendment that you have read is currently before the Legislature and if you want to do anything, you could ask to reserve judgement. That is always a prerogative of the chair. However, I do not think you can make me set this amendment aside one minute, and then argue that it is not before us the next. The chair should be cautious on this.

I think we would all be understanding if you are concerned that the amendment may be out of order and you would like some time to prepare a proper ruling on it. We would all be very kind. That is always a prerogative of the chair.

I would certainly be happy to let you get away with that one, but you cannot call me on it one minute and then run in the other direction the next. You would have to separate it by at least 10 minutes before I would let you get away with that.

Mr. Chairman: I think the member for Oshawa is getting his sections mixed up. We are

dealing with, and I am referring to, section 72. It was my understanding that the member for Oshawa was previously asking for unanimous consent to stand down section 72 and revert to section 10a.

Mr. Breagh: You had better read the unfortunate Hansard of this afternoon, sir. I think it would be interesting.

Mr. Chairman: And there was no unanimous consent for that.

Ms. Gigantes: I wonder if, while all this learned discussion has been going on, legislative counsel has come up with a draft which, though it may not be presented to us by the Attorney General, might be shared with us in this Legislature so we might think about whether we would like to put forward an amendment on this subject which might be more to his liking.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I think what is required, if I understand legislative counsel, is an amendment that provides that this act will come into force on the day of its proclamation or on January 1, 1988, whichever first occurs. The day of its proclamation is a matter determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and may be any day, except if it is going to be proclaimed rather than to come into force by virtue of its own language it has to be before January 1, 1988.

I would propose that if I could have one amendment it would be, "This act, except for section 10a, shall come into force on the date of its proclamation or on January 1, 1988, whichever first occurs." If that met the sense of the House we could then adjourn for two minutes and ask legislative counsel to draft that into the hated legalese.

Mr. Breagh: I would be happy to adjourn for a couple of minutes and let the Attorney General do that; but before we adjourn, I would ask the Attorney General to engage in this small exercise. Why does he not count? He is threatening us with having fewer members on that side outvote the members on this side. This may happen, but it is going to be a first in legislative history. I am not so sure we need all of that consultation, but if he would like to adjourn for 10 minutes to let us see if we can find some wording or if somebody could actually count noses and see how many ayes and nays are in here this afternoon, we might have the problem resolved one way or the other.

Mr. Harris: We would accept the minister's recommendation to adjourn for 10 minutes to see if he can find the wording. We are not going to agree today to the other conditions. If the

minister gives us the wording, we will move it and I think we can carry it.

Mr. Chairman: Do we have unanimous consent to suspend the proceedings for 10 minutes?

Agreed to.

The House recessed at 5:41 p.m.

1751

On section 72:

Mr. Chairman: The 10 minutes has expired. We are on section 72 and in front of us at the present time we have the amendment of the member for Carleton-Grenville, as struck out and reworded by him. What is the wish of the committee?

Ms. Gigantes: Let us proceed.

Mr. Chairman: Does the member for Ottawa Centre mean that we proceed with a vote on the honourable member's amendment?

Ms. Gigantes: We have, thanks to legislative counsel, an alternative amendment that I will move right now.

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me, though; we have an amendment by the member for Carleton-Grenville on the floor. We are dealing with that.

Ms. Gigantes: That is true, but I would move an amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Sterling: I have a very lengthy argument with regard to my amendment on section 72. For those members who are trying to get away, they might want to go away now because I hope to adjourn the debate this afternoon.

I think it is outrageous that the Attorney General would take such a stance on a section for which he put forward very weak arguments in terms of rejecting it. I am referring to his particular objections to section 10a about which he argued in our previous discussions. I think it is important that section 72 be amended. Until I asked the question of the Attorney General as to whether or not—

Mr. Ward: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: I am sorry to interrupt the member but I understood the member for Ottawa Centre to say that she had an amendment to the amendment. Should the debate on the amendment to the amendment not proceed first?

Mr. Chairman: No, I believe she stated she was going to move another amendment. I stated we had section 72 in front of us and the member for Carleton-Grenville had the floor when you brought up the point of order.

Ms. Gigantes: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Chairman: The member for Ottawa Centre, please.

Ms. Gigantes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Now you are on the point of order.

Ms. Gigantes: I am on the point of order. The amendment I propose to move is an amendment to the amendment of the member for Carleton-Grenville.

Mr. Chairman: That will be in order when the member for Ottawa Centre has the floor; that is correct.

Mr. Warner: Why can she not have the floor now?

Mr. Chairman: She cannot make a motion on a point of order.

Mr. Breagh: We appreciate the chair noting that it was a point of order when in fact the member wanted to place an amendment to an amendment. Thank you. That was very helpful. We will remember that one.

Mr. Sterling: Section 72 of the bill, as I was stating before, allows the cabinet of Ontario basically to legislate with regard to every section of this act that can be severed out by it if it chooses not to proclaim one or another section. I guess, from the statement of the Attorney General earlier that he intends to cut out—first he said section 10a and he also indicated earlier that he was going to cut out section 2 relating to the definition of “institution,” whereby a committee of this House chose to include freedom of information relating to municipalities, boards, school boards and every other kind of organization.

What do we know in terms of what this minister may do with regard to any kind of trust we place in him in dealing with the proclamation of this act?

I might add that this minister this very day came over to me and asked for my support with regard to a number of amendments put forward by the member for Ottawa Centre with regard to section 23 of this act. I said to the Attorney General that I would support him, although I had some concerns about one of the amendments, which I might have been convinced to support, with regard to the member for Ottawa Centre,

with, I thought, the full understanding that I would receive his support for the exclusion of the privacy amendment with regard to section 21.

Mr. Haggerty: Get it in writing.

Mr. Sterling: I am going to have to get it in writing because I cannot trust this Attorney General any more. In terms of dealing with this Attorney General, I do not know what to believe. This Legislature is going to have to deal not only with this piece of legislation but also with any future pieces of legislation in such a fashion as not to give the cabinet of Ontario the right to proclaim, either over a period of time or at some time in the future, a particular piece of legislation.

It is unfortunate that this Legislature carried a section of the bill that I put forward that would have increased access privileges for members of this Legislature, because maybe it should have included all members of the public in terms of providing continuing information under the freedom of information act. I thought it would be more reasonable to put it forward just for the members because of the horrendous costs the Attorney General has talked about. I do not believe there would be horrendous costs. I do not understand his objections to section 10a. Section 72—

Hon. Mr. Scott: There was not a majority in favour of it. That was my objection to it. It passed on a technical oversight.

Mr. Harris: There was not a single member of the Legislature opposed it; not one, including you.

Hon. Mr. Scott: You were not here.

Mr. Harris: I was not opposed to it.

Hon. Mr. Scott: But you were not here to see what happened.

Mr. Chairman: Order. The member for Carleton-Grenville has the floor. I draw the member's attention to the clock. Perhaps he might like to move that the committee rise and report.

On motion by Mr. Sterling, the committee of the whole House reported progress.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Tuesday, June 9, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, June 9, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

Mr. Mitchell: I regret the fact that, when I should really be speaking on positive notes, I must use this time today to condemn the Liberal government and in fact two ministers of the crown for their lack of concern in Ottawa-Carleton, either their interference in things that are out of their realm of responsibility or their noninvolvement.

I refer particularly to the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), who blatantly interfered in due process when he involved himself in an Ontario Municipal Board decision as it respected Nepean and Goulbourn in their education apportionment. He was asked for one simple thing—to provide a list of all the municipalities which are suffering the same financial burden as Nepean and Goulbourn—but to this point he has refused to do the same.

Then we have the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) who, although he has been given alternative proposals for the Bridlewood Hydro corridor, refuses even to look at them. He is seriously ignoring the fact that the Ministry of Education is supporting the building of an elementary school quite adjacent to this hydro corridor, where the people are concerned about the effect of health by the radiation from those lines. The minister is aware that there are alternative proposals which appear to be able to meet the demands of all, and he refuses to get himself involved and address those issues.

This is the sort of approach that is shown by ministers of the crown in their attitudes towards eastern Ontario.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mr. Allen: Under paragraph 10(1)9 of the Education Act, the minister has the power to prescribe accommodation and equipment of buildings and the arrangement of premises, and throughout parts of the act the obligation of the boards, under the act administered by the

minister, is clearly to provide adequate accommodation for pedagogical purposes.

Between 1967 and 1973, 29 so-called SEF schools—study of educational facilities schools—were constructed in the Metro Toronto area on an open plan, generally with no windows, wholly artificial light and so-called controlled atmosphere. Over the years, a huge list of complaints has accompanied the experience of these schools, leading to very serious questions as to their suitability as a learning environment.

A combination of poor artificial lighting balance, ventilation problems, noise levels, colour schemes, etc., combines to produce headaches, nausea, lethargy, irritability and a general psychological malaise among students and teachers. This is made worse by problems of lack of storage of a personal kind for pupils and staff and inadequate conditions such as carpeting that harbours infestations of various kinds.

These problems have been recognized at one or two of these schools. I suggest that the minister undertake, as he never has, a survey of them to examine their suitability as learning environments and to support both the boards and schools in question in attempts to renovate and improve the situation.

MISSING CHILDREN

Mr. McGuigan: I wish to step out of character and do a little bit of bragging. I am speaking in this instance about my endeavour to have established a better system for preventing, identifying, tracing and finding missing children.

The members will recall my research and report of the spring of 1985, Missing Children, and my subsequent resolution, which presently sits with the standing committee on social development and which I hope will soon be addressed. In both, I expressed my belief that a comprehensive, national missing-children registry should be established using the Canadian Police Information Centre.

A year ago, I was very pleased to participate with Ontario's Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) as Perrin Beatty announced the federal government's initiative to reduce this serious social problem. Paramount among these was the

commencing of a missing-children registry using the CPIC system, exactly as I had recommended.

Just recently, the first national statistics were released by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The benefits of this registry are becoming even more apparent. Drawing on these statistics, the government and private sector now are developing in tandem a better understanding of the nature and extent of this problem as it exists in Canada. The policies, policing, reporting and community responses now can be tailored to specifics and trends identified using comprehensive and accurate data.

CROP INSURANCE

Mr. Andrewes: On May 27, during statements, I called on the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) to release the report of the Crop Insurance Review Committee and to demonstrate some commitment to implement the recommendations of that report.

In response to my statement, the minister tabled the report on June 1, a report that contains a number of thoughtful and substantive recommendations. These recommendations deserve serious consideration by the government, but the budget of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) failed even to verbally acknowledge the existence of the report, let alone an allocation of funds for implementation.

Last Friday, we witnessed another major event in the life of the Minister of Agriculture and Food when he hosted agricultural leaders at a luncheon in Lincoln riding to announce that he had appointed Gordon Hill to chair the Crop Insurance Commission of Ontario, an appointment we would applaud. Although my invitation to this bunfest likely got lost in the mail, the taxpayers should know that they will foot the bill for this occasion, which incidentally provided an opportunity for the Liberal candidate in Lincoln to meet with his would-be electors at the taxpayers' expense.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Philip: Over the past 12 years, I have asked the Minister of Government Services to look into the exploitation of part-time and temporary workers by the Ontario government. While various Ministers of Labour have given lipservice to the problems faced by the uncertainty of part-time and temporary employees in the private sector, none the less the public sector commits exactly the same sin.

I would like to read a section of a letter from a constituent of mine:

"Over the past nine years, I have been working for the government of Ontario in various ministries shown in the attached letter, continuously without a break in my services, but I have not yet been made a permanent, classified employee. At the moment, I am not eligible for any of the pension or other benefits the government gives to its employees even though I have worked for nine years for the Ontario government.

"I will be 53 years old this July and would like to prepare for my retirement. I am a married man and have two sons, but I cannot prepare for my retirement with this uncertainty."

This gentleman started to work on February 1, 1978, and has worked for four ministries, including the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Metro Toronto Housing Authority and the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

If these employees are qualified to work for this long a time, they are qualified to be permanent full-time employees.

1340

INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH AND FARM MACHINERY SHOW

Mr. McKessock: I have a very important invitation to give to all the members in the Legislature. It will appear in their mailboxes tomorrow.

As the MPP representing Grey riding, it gives me great pleasure to invite members to the 1987 International Plowing Match and Farm Machinery Show, which will be held from September 15 to September 19 near Meaford. The match will be held on the farm of John and Velma Lowe in St. Vincent township, Grey county.

MPPs and MPs are invited to participate in the opening day luncheon at 11:45 a.m., the parade and the ploughing competition, which takes place immediately following the official opening on September 15.

Whether members have participated in the international ploughing match before or whether this is the first time, I know they will enjoy it. They do not have to be experienced ploughmen or ploughwomen. I might give a special invitation to the women to attend this year, since some of us know that women are very important in agriculture as they are our agricultural managers at home.

I would like members to respond immediately to John Fennel, who is the general manager of the International Plowing Match and Farm

Machinery Show. I look forward to seeing all members at the match this fall.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Mr. Partington: On April 10, the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) sent out a press release announcing more than 1,800 recipients of last year's Achievement Awards for amateur athletes in Ontario. In this announcement the minister praised these athletes. I could not agree with him more for his praise.

Each member of the House will have received a package including the names of the recipients and the sport in which they excelled. The media also received this information. The minister has notified everyone, it seems, except the athletes. To date, no letter or announcement has been sent to these fine athletes to inform them that their hard work and accomplishments have been recognized and that they are the chosen recipients of the Achievement Awards. Almost two months have passed since the media were informed. When can the athletes expect to be notified?

VISITOR

Mr. Speaker: If members would allow, I would like to draw their attention to a guest in the members' gallery, Paul Blundy, a former member of this Legislature for Sarnia. Welcome.

MEMBERS' ANNIVERSARIES

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the unanimous consent of the House to make a very brief statement related to your recognition of Mr. Blundy.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement?
Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: I thank the members for allowing this.

On June 9, 1977, the electorate of Ontario chose its 31st Parliament. Fifteen of the members elected at that point in time as new members or returned members are still here. In addition to that, we have Mr. Blundy.

I would like to recognize the members who are still here in the persons of the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe), the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz), the member for St. Catharines (Mr. Bradley), the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton), the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke), the member for Durham East (Mr. Cureatz), the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp), the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy), the member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel (Mr. J. M. Johnson), the member for Armourdale (Mr.

McCaffrey), the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan), the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope), the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling), the member for Peterborough (Mr. Turner), who was first elected in 1971 and then missed out in 1975 but returned in 1977, and finally, yours truly, the member for London North.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, the class of 1977 was a vintage year.

Mr. Harris: On behalf of our party, I too want to congratulate the members. I am not sure it is necessary for me to read them all into the record again, as I was prepared to do.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: What are you going to do for a speech if you don't?

Mr. Harris: That may be true. As the member for London—is it London South?

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: London North.

Mr. Harris: London North. South, north—I understand there are all kinds of problems in London these days.

As one who has been here slightly over six years, and many days it feels like 16 or 26 years, I can appreciate how long 10 years is in the life of an elected member of this great Legislative Assembly. In my opinion, it is worth 20 or 30 years of average work when one properly represents his or her constituency and the people of Ontario in the capacities that he or she must do in this Legislative Assembly and I congratulate all of them.

I might add that June 9, 1955, was also a very famous date in the history of this province and certainly as part of the history, heritage and legacy of my party. That was also the day 32 years ago when Allan Grossman was first elected to the great riding of St. Andrew-St. Patrick, which I understand is now being done away with through redistribution. It may be the last opportunity to mention that great riding. I mention that as well in my congratulations. He was a member who served this Legislature well for 20 years. I am sure those members who have been here for 10 years will appreciate what 20 years must be like. We offer our congratulations.

As I was listening to the list being read, I do not think there is one name from any of the parties I could suggest who has not worked long and hard and very diligently on behalf of his constituents. Other than those whom we know have felt 10 years is long enough, I am sure they will all be back representing their constituents after the great event that we expect will take place in 1989 or so.

Mr. McClellan: On behalf of the New Democratic Party, I also want to offer our congratulations to the 15 surviving members of the class of 1977. I think that was my favourite election of all four of the elections I have been in. Members will recall the issue in the election was the difference in the rent control guideline, I believe, of less than two per cent. The Premier felt that was a matter that required a decision of the people as to whether the rent review guideline would be eight per cent or six per cent. As usual, the Liberals could not make up their minds between eight per cent and six per cent, so they came down on the side of seven per cent.

June is my favourite month for an election. I regret that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) did not have the courage to have an election in June, which we were all expecting. Premier Davis was a man of conviction and was not afraid to consult the people, unlike the current Premier.

The 1977 election not only gave us the 15 illustrious survivors we are honouring today but also, I believe, saw the birth of the Brampton charter. Whatever happened to the Brampton charter?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That was two trees for one.

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Mr. McClellan: Two trees for one and the wonderful slogan "Keep the promise;" which still applies, I may say. Finally, I must note that the winner of that election was Stuart Smith. I want to congratulate in particular the member for Windsor-Riverside and the member for Hamilton Mountain, who have both made an outstanding contribution in our caucus. To all the other members of the class of 1977, our congratulations and best wishes.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel on a point of what?

Mr. J. M. Johnson: Personal privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Personal privilege? I will try it.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: My very good friend the member for London North read into the record that I was elected with the class of 1977. It was really the class of 1975. I would not bring it to your attention, sir, except the information was provided by the Clerk at the table and I wonder if my pension is slated in the same category.

Mr. Rae: Why is that man thinking about his pension? He is running again.

Mr. Rowe: And he'll be in cabinet next time.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I wish to announce today that on October 1, 1987, new regulations under the Employment Standards Act providing enhanced working conditions for domestics and nannies will take effect.

The new regulations place these employees on the same legal footing as other wage earners in two key respects: overtime pay and the minimum wage. The measures also seek to clarify and regularize working relationships between employers and domestics. They set new requirements for record-keeping and written particulars of employment.

It is estimated that almost 20,000 people are employed as live-in domestics in Ontario. Virtually all are women, and virtually all are involved in the care of children. Many are newcomers to Canada and a great number are employed in domestic situations as a condition of federal immigration visas. Many also belong to the province's visible minority groups.

We are dealing here with a sizeable segment of the working population which is, for various reasons, economically vulnerable. Added to this is the fact that prior to 1981, domestics had been excluded from substantive protection under the Employment Standards Act.

In 1981, for the first time, full-time domestics and nannies were brought under the protection of minimum wage provisions and were granted protection for vacations, holidays and weekly free periods. More recently, full-time domestics living outside the household were also included in provisions for overtime payment, although live-in domestics were not.

These changes were welcome, but they left some very large gaps. Domestic workers were still not enjoying some of the fundamental protections enjoyed by other wage earners in Ontario, and I am sorry to say that reports of substandard working conditions continued. With these new regulations being filed today, many of those gaps will be filled.

The new standards will apply for the most part only to those regarded as full-time domestics; that is, to those employed more than 24 hours a week and to nannies qualified by special training in child care.

One of the key changes has to do with overtime payments. Under the present regulation, domestic employees living outside the household must be paid a minimum of \$6.53 for each hour worked beyond 44 hours a week. On the other

hand, live-in domestics and nannies are exempt from overtime protection of any kind.

Starting in October, all full-time live-in domestics, full-time live-out domestics and nannies will be subject to the same overtime provision. This calls for overtime pay at the rate of one and one half times the regular hourly rate for each hour worked in excess of 44 hours a week.

Alternatively, the employer and employee may agree to compensation in the form of time off at the rate of one and one half hours off for each overtime hour worked.

This provision is intended to give recognition to overtime worked by domestic employees and at the same time to discourage the scheduling of excessively long hours.

I would like to point out that full-time live-in sitters have been specifically included in these overtime provisions. Previously, they were not included and this left room for abuse. It was found, for example, that the appellation of "sitter" has sometimes been applied to general domestic employees as a means of evading basic employment obligations.

This loophole has now been closed. Live-in sitters perform a valuable child care function in the home, and the government believes that they should be placed on the same footing as other domestics with regard to overtime pay and the other new provisions I am outlining today. Sitters will also be entitled to the weekly free periods which currently apply to other live-in domestics.

Other key changes in the regulations relate to the minimum wage.

Under the existing standards, the minimum rate for domestics can be hourly, daily, weekly or monthly. This discriminates against employees working longer hours. An employee might find herself working 10 hours in a day, for example, and still receive only the daily minimum based on eight hours.

Under the new regulation, only the general hourly minimum wage will apply to domestics. We are also including live-out domestics who work 24 hours or less in a week. For the first time, these part-timers will be entitled to the minimum wage.

A minimum wage based exclusively on an hourly rate ensures that domestics are compensated for each and every hour worked.

To enforce these provisions, the new regulations will require that employers keep daily and weekly records showing the number of hours worked by employees. In this, they are not being

asked to do more than is required of other employers.

As a further measure, employers will be required to furnish such employees with written job particulars. These must specify regular hours of work, including starting and finishing times, as well as the hourly rate of pay. Since there may be some difficulty in distinguishing between working and nonworking time, especially for live-in employees, the new regulations will set out a clarification of nonworking time.

On one issue, maximum hours of work for domestics, we have decided to defer action for the moment. A resolution of this question will await the findings of the Task Force on Hours of Work and Overtime. The second phase of the task force report will deal with domestic employment and is expected this fall.

In the meantime, the new overtime provisions will decrease the possibility that employers will make excessive demands on domestic employees with regard to hours of work.

A factor we have had to contend with in making these changes is that live-in domestics are in a very special position. They are not like factory workers who can punch in and then punch out at the end of the day. Their work does not easily lend itself to precise schedules and quitting times, especially where the care of children is involved.

At the same time, domestic employees have as much right as anyone else to adequate wages, to extra compensation for extra effort and to free time. It is our intention in framing these regulations to ensure that they be afforded these rights to the fullest possible extent and, within the limits imposed upon us by the very special nature of the case, I submit that we have succeeded.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Hon. Mr. Elston: Members will be aware that Monday, June 8, marked the beginning of an AIDS Awareness Week in Toronto.

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome is a serious world health problem. From a provincial perspective, Ontario accounts for almost 38 per cent of all reported AIDS cases in Canada. The disease represents a genuine threat to every community in Ontario, and this government has responded on every front.

We have provided over \$7 million in support of various research, education and counselling initiatives, most notably the following: the establishment of a human immunodeficiency

virus isolation lab; the provision of azidothymidine free of charge to AIDS patients participating in ongoing treatment trials; and the establishment of Casey House, a residence for people in the advanced stages of the disease.

Over the last few years, the emphasis of our AIDS public education efforts has been to provide accurate and timely information to the people of Ontario about the basic characteristics of the disease.

Since then, our information and education requirements have changed. While we must still reinforce the message that AIDS is not spread by casual contact, we must also place increased emphasis on ensuring that people are aware of the real risks and what they can do to protect themselves. Finally, we must satisfy the increased requirement for counselling and support services for people who have been exposed to the virus or developed the disease.

The Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS, OPEPA, has recommended that the ministry now encourage the development of community-based organizations to provide a broad range of education, counselling and support programs.

In the spirit of AIDS Awareness Week, and to update the members of this House on my ministry's support of AIDS-related initiatives, I am pleased to announce that the Ministry of Health has set aside \$420,000 in funding for community-based AIDS education programs and counselling and support initiatives.

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Community-based efforts are among the most effective ways to rally the energies and dedication of volunteers and to get the AIDS message across to the public at large, including those not being reached in schools, by fact sheets, newspaper articles or other more traditional sources of health information and education. The AIDS Committee of Toronto, ACT, which the ministry already funds, is a good example of this.

My ministry is requesting program proposals from local AIDS organizations, health agencies, citizens' groups and other organizations around the province wishing to offer such services in the communities they serve.

Program proposal forms are being provided to groups which have already advised the ministry or OPEPA of their interest in providing such AIDS-related services at the local level. Forms may also be obtained, in either English or French, by contacting the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS, local health units and district health councils. Program proposals must be received by August 1, 1987.

OPEPA will review the submissions and make funding recommendations. District health councils will also have an opportunity to review the proposals and make comments and recommendations.

The government views this funding initiative as an important new component in its overall strategy against AIDS. By developing knowledge, expertise and leadership at the grass-roots level and by providing people the opportunity to discuss AIDS-related issues in familiar settings, we are creating opportunities for education that will have a positive impact upon attitudes, behaviour and the health status of the people of Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would like to join my colleague the Minister of Health in making an additional announcement with respect to the whole AIDS question.

The acquired immune deficiency syndrome, or AIDS, as it is more commonly known, is a serious medical and social concern in Canada and around the world. To date, there is no known cure.

The challenge facing Ontario, which we are particularly mindful of during AIDS Awareness Week, is to educate ourselves and our children about the risks of AIDS. It is up to us, as parents, educators and community leaders, to give young people the information required to make responsible decisions about health matters and to help them avoid the AIDS virus.

To meet that challenge, I stated in this chamber in January that AIDS education would be mandatory in Ontario schools beginning in the 1987-88 school year. I would like to announce that the Ontario Ministry of Education is meeting that commitment and is today releasing a draft curriculum document that will form the basis of AIDS education in our Ontario schools.

This means that AIDS education will be a mandatory unit of study in the health education program for students in grades 7 and 8 and for those students in the secondary school health education program.

The draft document is divided into four main parts: some facts about AIDS; general teaching strategies; teaching strategies for grades 7 and 8; and teaching strategies for the secondary school grades. The suggested strategies in this draft document give teachers the flexibility to design instructional programs, dealing with AIDS, that are suitable for various grade levels and that respond to local community needs.

This document will be circulated within the next few days to teachers and to school

administrators for validation and response. Their comments and suggestions will be incorporated into a final document, which will be distributed to our Ontario schools by this fall. The AIDS education programs will be introduced as part of the curriculum early in the new school year.

By making this document available, it is our aim to help teachers develop teaching strategies to better inform students about the disease and to make students aware of ways in which it is transmitted and how it can be prevented.

The draft AIDS education document also, and we feel this is important, stresses that parents must be made aware of the general content and purpose of this program, and it suggests that school administrators consider involving parents in a course covering the same subject matter as the one given to their children.

I should also point out that parents or guardians of a student, or a student who is 18 years of age or older, who believe that any component of a physical or health education program is in conflict with their beliefs may apply for an exemption from such a component.

I believe this document will be an important part of our co-operative efforts to combat this deadly disease. If we act now, we can save lives. If we teach our children to make responsible decisions, we will save lives.

RESPONSES

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Mr. Gordon: I would like to respond to the statement made by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) on the matter of overtime wages. I must commend the minister, but I must also say that we on this side of the House are disappointed that he chose to ignore the plight of perhaps 20,000 people who are domestics who live in in this province, who are immigrants and who, perhaps because of language barriers or fear because they have just come to this country, are not always able to speak out for their rights.

It was our hope the minister would speak out for their rights and would see that a limit would be put on the maximum number of hours these people would be working in homes. Surely, the minister is aware of the pressures that are being placed on these people. Most of them are women and most of them do not have the kind of background and experience that allows them to protest. I hope the minister will not take much more time to make a decision in their favour.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Mr. Andrewes: The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), in his statement regarding acquired immune deficiency syndrome and AIDS support, failed to mention that it was badgering by the opposition in this House and in the estimates that certainly brought about the kind of funding he is speaking of, particularly to the AIDS Committee of Toronto.

It was this opposition, and particularly the member for St. George (Ms. Fish), who brought to the minister's attention the desperate needs of a group working to fund Casey House. It was only through the efforts of the opposition that at the 11th hour the Minister of Health saw fit to provide the funding necessary to make Casey House a reality.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), in his add-on to the Minister of Health's statement, failed to mention that it was a question by the official opposition that prompted him to leave this House, and in spite of a lack of consultation and in spite of a lack of preparedness, spontaneously announce that AIDS education would be taught in the classrooms of the province.

This disease and the public concern, the public fear around this disease, far outweigh public knowledge. Until a cure for AIDS can be found, prevention is the most important component in a health policy that will beat this dreaded disease. I trust that this announcement and the announcement of the Minister of Health herald a new attitude of this government towards what many describe as the greatest health threat of this decade.

Ms. Fish: I rise to respond to the announcement by the Minister of Education respecting the AIDS education curriculum. I hope it is indeed a curriculum, not simply a support document but a clear direction on the AIDS education that will be given in our schools. The minister's statement indicated that AIDS education would be mandatory and went on to speak of it as a component within health or physical education subjects.

Within that frame, none the less, the minister provides the option for students to be withdrawn from that program. This is not a discussion about sexuality. This is not a discussion about issues that should confront or make difficult personal beliefs or values. This is a discussion and an instruction about the health of our people, dealing with a deadly disease that is at epidemic proportions within our province and across North America. It must be dealt with in a clear and direct fashion by reaching our students.

It is my sincere hope, and our hope on this side, that in reviewing the responses to this document, the minister will reconsider the designation of "support document" and, as he indicated early today, make clear that this is curriculum; and similarly will re-examine the loophole provided for the withdrawal of students from education on this matter, so critical to their health and physical wellbeing.

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Mr. Rae: AIDS is, without question, the public health challenge of our time. When the history of this period is written, I think it will clearly show that the political system has fallen well behind the extent of the problem and has also fallen behind public readiness not only to discuss the problem and to be aware of it but also to deal with it.

I would say to the Minister of Education that perhaps the following words, taken from page 14 of the draft curriculum, should become part of a general public education campaign which needs to spread very much beyond our school system. The draft curriculum says: "AIDS is not spread by casual contact. A person cannot get AIDS from a playground, a public washroom, swimming pool, a public telephone, food, drinking fountains, hugs and so on."

It is extremely important that much of the public misconception about what this horrendous virus is and how it is transmitted needs to be dealt with and tackled head on by government.

We also need to recognize, as the curriculum does, that if we look at the history of AIDS, a relatively recent history, particularly if we look at the experience now in Africa and some other countries, AIDS is not in any sense a disease that is confined to the homosexual population. It is not the gay plague, as it has been so wrongly described. It is in fact a virus which is spread by sexual contact and it is a virus which can spread by means of heterosexual contact between men and women as easily and as readily as it can spread between men and men. That is worth pointing out and worth our talking about in a very frank way.

When it comes to how AIDS can be prevented, the curriculum document states on page 69: "Sexual abstinence is the most effective means of prevention of the spread of AIDS....If abstinence is not practised, the use of a latex condom with spermicide containing nonoxynol-9 can provide some protection against the human immunodeficiency virus."

This may not be the time or the opportunity for us to discuss this at length. I just think it is unwise

if abstinence and the preaching of abstinence becomes the substance or the core of the government's approach and the public education approach with respect to AIDS.

If one looks back at the 19th-century experience with syphilis and other venereal diseases and the tremendous public health campaign that was necessary in order to begin to stop the spread of those publicly transmitted diseases, one will find that the beginning of the campaign was the preaching of morality and of abstinence; it was only when the experiences of the First and Second World Wars finally came into play and people realized the extent of the problem that the films and the work of public health no longer focused on the question of abstinence but focused on the effective means of prevention. Because, if I may say so, preaching morality is not going to work. It is not going to solve the problem. It is teaching effective prevention that is going to solve the problem. It seems to me that is something the government is going to have to face up to head on.

Not enough is being done. There is still too much reliance on volunteers. There is an AIDS Committee of Toronto, but there are other committees outside Toronto which are not being publicly supported at the present time. We have a long way to go to face up to the extent and the severity of this problem. It is time we all started talking about it and expressed a willingness to talk about it and a willingness to deal with this very serious disease which affects far too many people and is spreading far too quickly.

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Mr. Mackenzie: We welcome the new protection for domestics that is involved in the change in regulations we have before us today. We have fought long and hard for these changes for domestics, working closely with the International Coalition to End Domestics' Exploitation.

We do have difficulty with the option of time and a half in lieu of overtime if agreed between the parties, because we know that the bargaining power is not going to be with the domestic workers. We also have concern with the lack of maximum hours in this legislation and the referral to the Task Force on Hours of Work and Overtime. I sometimes wonder whether that task force is ever going to report, whether this House is going to see its report or whether it will report only to the minister. That is a serious concern to us.

We want to see the regulations before we make any further comments on this, because if there is

not a change in legislation and there is not the coverage under the Labour Relations Act we want that as well.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Premier. Could the Premier indicate to this House and to the people of Ontario what his belief is with respect to the overcapacity of the automotive industry in Canada and in this province in terms of the number of cars, jobs and plants, and whether he thinks it is an immediate economic challenge for Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The question of the management of the automotive industry is a major concern of this government and has been for preceding governments as well. There are a number of analysts looking at the industry in North America now and, indeed, at the world-wide ramifications. They are looking ahead and wondering what the correct and appropriate response will be.

I should tell the honourable member that one of the advantages we enjoy in Ontario is that our unit cost of production is substantially below that of the United States, and we expect that competitive position to be maintained for a long period of time. That being said, we have seen a major down-sizing of some of the productive capacities. General Motors has closed down 11 factories in the United States, but at the same time, interestingly enough, it has put into place in Oshawa the largest part of its sector investment ever in Canada, some \$2 billion, to keep it competitive and keep it growing.

We have a number of concerns which relate to our national automotive policy, particularly with regard to imports from the Pacific Rim countries. The minister has shared those views with M. Côté; I have shared them with the Prime Minister. We are hoping that the federal government will be coming forward very quickly with a comprehensive automotive strategy with respect to imports from the Asian countries.

I should tell my honourable friend that I have met extensively with all people concerned in this matter, be it the Canadian Auto Workers leadership, the leadership of the assemblers or the automotive parts manufacturers. I think we have created a clear position to take to the federal government and I hope it will respond in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. Pope: The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) indicated in the House on June 3 that the government had

undertaken a study. Could the Premier indicate to the House now whether that study indicates what others have shown, that is that there is a clear indication of an overcapacity in two and a half years of five million cars, putting 285,000 jobs at risk in the province? Do the internal studies of the government verify that number?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not in a position to verify that, but I can go back to my previous answer and say that there are concerns with the competitiveness in the long term. We think structurally we are in a very good position. Obviously, we are concerned about any changes in the auto pact. As the member will know, there are some that are bringing pressures to bear on that.

We are being vigilant. We are trying to extend the national policy into an international policy in that regard. I can assure my honourable friend that if he asked people in the automotive industry, be it on the labour side, the CAW or the various manufacturers, they would tell him that the Ontario government not only has been very understanding and very co-operative but also has advanced their cause with great determination.

Mr. Pope: I do not understand how the Premier can say on the one hand that this is an important industry, an important issue confronting Ontario now and, on the other hand, have no idea what his internal studies show in terms of overcapacity. How many jobs are at risk?

His Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology said on June 4 that he and his government were working closely with labour and the federal government to make sure there was not an overcapacity in this province. Can he explain what that means? Is he closing plants? Is he laying people off? What is he planning now? His minister said it.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The member always comes up with these strange questions that are very tough to interpret. But no, the answer is we are not closing any plants. We on this side of the House do not close plants; we open plants.

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ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Premier. Will he tell the House the position, responsibilities and employer of Heather Peterson?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: She is paid by the party so as not to give rise to any kind of suspicion the member might have—and I have some understanding of his kind of mind—and she works in

my office under the direct responsibility of Mr. Ashworth.

Mr. Andrewes: Last week, on May 31, we read in the Toronto Star that Heather Peterson is "the loyal lieutenant who gets to hand out the plum jobs at Queen's Park." Does the Premier consider it appropriate that the person directly responsible for the appointment of hundreds of people to agencies, boards and commissions across this province is accountable not to the Premier, not to his cabinet, but to the president of the Liberal Party of Ontario? Does he think that is appropriate?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: She is accountable to Mr. Ashworth and directly to me in that regard. She is paid by the Liberal Party so that members will not stand up in this House and say there is some kind of nepotism at work. My friend cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Gillies: Where is her accountability to Management Board? Where does she appear in the estimates? How can you have a partisan handing out government jobs?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: You have to be kidding.

Mr. Callahan: Your tongue should burn out, Phil.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would remind all members that some of the members would like to ask questions.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, the member for Middlesex (Mr. Reycraft).

Mr. Andrewes: We are not questioning the quality of the individual. We are not questioning her performance. We are not questioning her capability. We are not questioning the quality of her recommendations. What we are questioning is the propriety of an employee of the Liberal Party of Ontario, responsible and accountable to the executive of the Liberal Party of Ontario, playing a direct role in the appointment of individuals holding very responsible positions on agencies, boards and commissions in the province.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Andrewes: Will the Premier table all the information surrounding the employment of Heather Peterson so that the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Andrewes: I will wait, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Andrewes: I want to ask the Premier if he will table all the information surrounding the employment of Heather Peterson so that the Legislative Assembly committee might investigate the propriety of this employment.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: She does not make any appointments. The executive council makes the appointments. Maybe the member will want to tell a number of his honourable colleagues who come calling on her regularly looking for appointments to stop doing so.

Mr. Gillies: We would probably just replace the whole civil service with Liberal hacks if we followed your logic.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There have been two questions. Now it is time for the third question.

CONVERSION OF RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I would like to ask him some questions about the Renterprise program. The minister will recall he announced it in December 1985. It was originally announced as a \$75-million program to produce rental housing in the province.

I wonder if the minister can answer two questions. Can he tell us how many units have been built or are planned to be built under the Renterprise program? Can he tell us if any of these units have been converted to condominiums, or has the Ministry of Housing been made aware of any plans to convert to condominiums?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The Renterprise program, as the member indicates, had a target of 5,000 units. As I explained to the honourable member yesterday, we advertised those. Requests for applications came in and so far we have had 3,643. The response was very good.

Some of the people who have applied have indicated they would rather not go through the Renterprise program; they would rather go on their own. This is a good indication, because these are the same private people who have said they would not build rental units at all. Here is the private sector saying it will go on its own without any government assistance.

When we saw that the 5,000 units were not achieved because of those people who went on their own, we sent out another notice for people to apply again. We had a second call on that. That was done and it was also successful.

In the second part of the question, the member asked if there were any conversions. The applications specifically stated that was quite possible. They may first start in the rental program and then convert later to condominiums. Those were considered.

Mr. Rae: I am glad the minister has told us that of 5,000 units expected to be built, some 3,600 are in the works. Already he is short there. Is the minister aware that his own ministry has told us that of those 3,600 units, the developers of 2,353 units have indicated to the Ministry of Housing that they intend to register their units as condominiums?

I wonder if the minister can explain why the taxpayers of Ontario are subsidizing builders who are not producing rental housing; they are producing condominiums in Ontario. They are not producing geared-to-income housing; they are producing condominiums for the rich and famous.

Why are the taxpayers of Ontario getting ripped off in this way when there are people who are living in basements in Ontario because the Liberal government has not had the courage to introduce an affordable housing program since it was elected two years ago?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is not the case at all. The agreement was that the Renterprise program agreed that they can be registered as condominiums and converted to condominiums at some time down the road. They are being rented, to be affordable, under that condition.

We indicated we would put 6,700 government-assisted, nonprofit units on the market and we have exceeded that. To say that we are not honouring our commitment is not showing the facts properly at all.

Mr. Rae: As I said in the House yesterday, even according to the minister's own estimates, the shortfall is as much as 13,000 units compared to what he said was required. What he has ended up doing is giving money to developers to build condominiums. That is what Liberal money has gone for, that is what taxpayers' money has gone for, and it is unconscionable when we consider the needs of people who are living in basements.

I wonder if the minister can comment on the one case I would like to bring to his attention. It is a case in my own constituency, and I have several others for the minister if he is not satisfied.

Catherine Young has two children, who are 14 years and nine months. She receives family benefits of \$803 a month. She lives in the basement of her mother's house. Her children sleep next to the water tank. She has been on the

Ontario Housing waiting list for nine months. She has medical reports showing that her living conditions have resulted in anxiety and depression. She is joining over 7,000 other families on the waiting list in Ontario, in Toronto, and she has been told she cannot expect to get housing soon because she does not have sufficient points.

There are literally thousands of cases like Mrs. Young's. Just how does the minister intend to deal with this instead of giving money to people who are putting up condominiums in Ontario?

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Hon. Mr. Curling: For years there was a backlog of neglect, but the honourable leader expects me to have solved this problem over 18 months. The honourable leader of the third party also expects that as soon as we announce and we have committed and put funds in the direction of solving these problems, these units will be built overnight. With all the statistics he has tried to show in the House each day, he must understand that we are committed to this cause. In 1987, we have shown that it is not only rental units that have been built but also condominiums that are for rental; over 23,000 units have been completed in that year.

Mr. Rae: The Minister of Housing will be known not as the friend of people who are living in difficult conditions. He will be known as Condo Curling. That is how he will be known in Ontario, the person who used taxpayers' dollars to put up condominiums instead of housing for people who need it.

MINING SAFETY

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Last week, the minister and I had an exchange about the question of conditions in the mining industry and the practices in the mining industry. He indicated to the House that a study would be completed soon and that he would be making a statement soon with respect to the practice in the mining industry; in particular, the question of people working above other workers.

Can the minister confirm that this study was completed as of Friday? Can he also confirm that the study will not be made public because of concerns with respect to the impact it could have on the criminal trial that is now under way?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am not certain whether the study was completed on Friday. In making my statement, I wanted to combine the statement on the overall study that was done in the mines with any comments that might emerge from our own investigation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act into the Levack tragedy. I am waiting

until I am advised that both of those matters are complete before I make that one statement. I would not want to be pinned down to an exact date, but the end of this week or the very early part of next week is my latest understanding, from our investigation people and from the legal branch, of when we should have this matter all pulled together.

Mr. Rae: In pulling it all together, as the minister says, while Mr. Kuhle awaits his trial, can the minister tell us whether any orders have been issued to any companies in Ontario with respect to a practice that he has said is not taking place as a matter of policy in Ontario? Can he tell us whether any orders have been issued to any mining companies, including Inco, with respect to this so-called nonexistent practice?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I remind the honourable member that we made a commitment; following the release of muck from the storage or the holding area, which was the cause of that terrible tragedy at Levack, we said we would check and see whether the situation that led to that tragedy was being pursued or whether that situation existed in other mines in Ontario. A very thorough investigation of those situations was undertaken and my understanding is there have been some orders written. I am not certain in what direction and I will not until I have had a chance to talk to the director of the mining health and safety branch.

Going back to the honourable leader of the third party's first question, any limitation on what we might say—

Mr. Speaker: Order. This was in response to the supplementary. Final supplementary.

Mr. Rae: Perhaps the minister can explain the view of the Ministry of Labour in this matter. A worker has been charged with four counts of criminal negligence causing death, not after an investigation by the Ministry of Labour but after investigation by the police, which was taking place either before or parallel to some kind of an investigation by various inspectors of the Ministry of Labour.

As a result of the minister's own intervention, although the minister says he does not know, it is our information that there have been several orders issued around the province with respect to a practice which the minister said was nonexistent and for which an individual worker is now being charged with criminal negligence causing death.

I would like to ask the minister: just what is going on in Ontario? He is issuing orders because companies are doing something, and he is

leaving a worker out to dry because he was doing something which was going on in his own company. Why should workers have to carry the can when the minister did not issue the orders before and did not know what the policy was before it was taken—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable member is mixing some apples with oranges and I think he is also asking me to comment on a very serious—and I agreed it is very serious—charge which has been laid under the Criminal Code.

I will ignore the question and simply say that some of the preamble to the question indeed suggested a question that might have been better put to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) because it surrounds the laying of a criminal charge in this matter.

ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Andrewes: I wonder if the Premier could tell the House the responsibilities of the director of appointments.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The director of appointments, accountable to Mr. Ashworth, who is the executive director of the Office of the Premier, gathers up recommendations, talks with members of the executive council and organizes the books.

As the member knows, all the books are public now on appointments, something those guys never would do. We have brought greater changes, opened up the system and allowed all people in Ontario to participate.

Mr. Andrewes: On May 31, the Toronto Star said the following, "Heather Peterson is a woman of influence at Queen's Park, the province's top headhunter, the Premier's sister-in-law and responsible for a vast range of special appointments."

Is it appropriate that the director of appointments be accountable to the executive of the Liberal Party of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the member wants to flog this old horse, go ahead; it is fine.

Mr. Rae: That's no way to talk about your sister-in-law.

Mr. Pope: What a terrible thing to say.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will repeat what I have said. It is the executive council that makes the appointments, not Heather Peterson, not the member or anybody else. The executive council makes them. If the member has any complaints with that, please bring them to me.

Mr. Gillies: He called her an old horse.

Mr. Stevenson: If your sister-in-law is from the horse family, is your wife from the dog family?

Mr. Epp: Withdraw that.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) may have a turn later. The member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) does not have the floor.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Pouliot: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications. The minister will be aware that for months, on several occasions I have asked that his ministry conduct a feasibility study to determine the necessity of providing a four-lane highway between Nipigon and Shabakwa in northwestern Ontario, which is the present Trans-Canada Highway 17.

He has had several months to conduct the study. We fully acquiesce and understand that it is a federal-provincial undertaking. When will the minister release the study undertaken by his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I thank the member for his question and I hope he is correct in stating that it is a federal-provincial undertaking. We would welcome federal participation. As he knows—

Mr. Pouliot: That is what the minister's letter says.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: —we have approached the federal government to participate, as it did many years ago in the original construction of Highway 17, the Trans-Canada, and as it is doing in the western provinces. We have asked them to join us in rehabilitating Highway 17.

The member will also appreciate that, given the length and the magnitude of that particular highway, and being the Trans-Canada, it is of particular importance to all of us as Canadians. There is great deal of work to be done on that road and we acknowledge it. We are in fact doing work on that road this year, not necessarily in that particular location but in those areas of need as we are financially able to address them.

1440

Mr. Wildman: In the light of the minister's comments in answer to my colleague, can he indicate if this government has applied to the federal government for the beginning of negotiations for an economic regional development agreement between this province and the government of Canada for federal funding for the Trans-Canada Highway through northern Ontario?

If it has, can he indicate when this government will be able to commit funds for a phased-in timetable for the reconstruction of the Trans-Canada Highway across northern Ontario? Do not give us the kind of announcement that came from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines that it is going to four-lane Highway 11 and Highway 69 in 10 years.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: The member will know that we have attempted to enter into some kind of arrangement with the federal government. We acknowledged that and stated that publicly on a number of occasions.

The member will also know that we are attempting at great speed to resolve the issues in his riding in dealing with Highway 17. We have assigned that as a high priority to our northern staff and we are attempting to resolve that. We are spending money. I can never understand that these members decry what is not being done, and yet my colleague the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay) announced 10 new highway initiatives and two more in the planning stages in northern Ontario only last week.

Mr. Wildman: Planning stages—10 years have gone by.

Mr. Pouliot: Which side of the road is the member for Timiskaming on?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Nipissing would like to ask a new question.

CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST GUIDELINES

Mr. Harris: My question is to the Premier. Is the Premier aware that at least six of his parliamentary assistants have not disclosed their holdings, as was required over four months ago under his conflict-of-interest guidelines?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not aware of any irregularities. Perhaps the honourable member can assist me in that.

Mr. Harris: It is a sad day when somebody has to assist the Premier with his responsibilities, but I will do my best.

One of at least six, incredibly, is the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), the man whose conflict violations resulted in his resignation from cabinet a year ago this month. Maybe the Premier could explain to this House why we have spent month after month debating new conflict-of-interest guidelines when it is blatantly obvious that as Premier he has no intention to enforce any guidelines that come up?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I said to my honourable friend, I am not aware of any irregularities. If he has any suggestions of that, then I will certainly look into them.

COMFORT ALLOWANCES

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Premier. I am presuming that the Premier has accepted the notion that Ontario should comply with the federal Charter of Rights; otherwise, we would see notwithstanding clauses being brought in by this province, which we have not seen at this time.

Can he therefore explain to me why government policy in Ontario at this time allows discrimination on age, on disability and on the whole question of equality of service to people in our long-term institutions in Ontario, according to the amount of comfort allowance that people on fixed incomes in those institutions can receive?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not sure if my honourable friend is alleging that there is some violation of the Charter of Rights here, whether he brought a legal case forward or what exactly he is telling me is a source of discrimination. As he knows, some of his members opposite have encouraged us to increase the discrimination, for example, between the two classes of the disabled and that kind of thing. We are trying very hard to end any of that kind of discrimination.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The Premier will know that our position on the disabled is that they should be brought to the same level as the elderly and that the discrimination that is there currently should not continue.

What I am raising with the Premier is the fact that a disabled person in a nursing home in Ontario gets \$77 a month for comfort allowance; an older person in a home for the aged or a nursing home gets \$112 a month; but a psycho-geriatric patient, 65 and over, in a psychiatric institution, does not get a penny of comfort allowance. A physically handicapped person who is also developmentally handicapped in one of our long-term institutions for the developmentally handicapped, also does not get a cent.

In my view, this does offend the charter and I am surprised the Premier has not moved on it.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Will he please adjust this so there is equality in our institutions for those people in long-term care in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The entire question of comfort allowances is one we have been looking

at with some determination in the last little while. We have spent a lot of time on it. I expect that in the not-too-distant future we will be able to share our views and the results of that examination.

FUND-RAISING

Mr. Harris: I wonder whether the Premier considers it proper that invitations to the \$200-a-head fund-raiser for the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) were sent to the executive of the Ontario Medical Association at a very sensitive time while that association is in the middle of negotiations with the government.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not know who the member is referring to. I am not aware of any massive support for this particular party by the members of the OMA or whoever he is talking about. I do not know what timing he is talking about or who he is talking about.

Mr. Harris: I am tempted to comment on the answer but the reply was hardly worth comment from anybody in this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker: It is now time for a supplementary.

Mr. Harris: It is clear that government mailing lists were improperly used for this venture. The Premier will know by now that the Canadian Acupuncture Association received a letter as well and was offended by the letter. They have been trying to meet with the Minister of Health since he was sworn in and have not been given an appointment, but now they have received what they consider a dunning letter for this sleazy fund-raiser.

Given all the irregularities, the use of government lists, the use of the provincial crest, the Ontario Medical Association in sensitive negotiations right now with his government, will the Premier now agree that this fund-raiser should be cancelled pending the report of the standing committee on public accounts that will be investigating these irregularities?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I understand it, a number of these questions were asked of the honourable minister. If the member wants to ask him any questions about it, he should please feel free to ask him about it. I tell the member very clearly that his characterization of it as a "dunning letter" is completely and absolutely incorrect. People who want freely to support this party, the member's party or any other party are entitled to do that. I do not know about the member but we do not offer any favours in this party; maybe he does.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Windsor-Riverside is waiting.

PLANT CLOSURES

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. It is in regard to the occupation of Sheller-Globe that occurred a few weeks ago. Workers were forced to occupy a plant to get basic information, to get a decent severance package, to get information on their pensions and some basic reasons why that company was closing its plant and throwing 200 people out of work. Another group of employees at Lamb corporation in our community are currently having to participate in an information picket line to try to get some basic information about their pension plan and the layoffs that are taking place at their company.

When will the minister bring in legislation to force companies to justify publicly mass layoffs, both to the community in which they made profits and to the workers who have provided those profits for the companies over the years?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I hope to be in a position to introduce legislation to amend the Employment Standards Act within a week.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I believe the legislation the minister is going to introduce is going to deal with severance but it is not going to deal with plant closure justification. Is it not a fact that with the minister's refusal to introduce longer notice periods and public justification, he is responsible for the occupation that took place at Sheller-Globe and is encouraging more occupations of plants so workers can achieve basic justification for the plant closures and the loss of their jobs.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The answer is no, I will not accept, nor would I suggest the member accepts, responsibility for that very unfortunate incident. A series of issues led to that. I believe our legislation will be a very positive response to the need for more sensitive labour adjustment policies across this province, and I would suggest to my honourable friend from Windsor-Riverside that he think a little more carefully before he makes statements like that and asks questions like that which, it seems to me, do nothing but serve to inflame the sometimes difficult situations.

1450

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communica-

tions. Back on March 25, Via Rail cancelled certain service to Brampton and thereby deprived my residents of additional service. I would like to ask the minister what steps he is taking, in the light of the Via Rail cancellation, in terms of increasing the service to the residents of my community?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I would like to thank the member for his question and his continued interest in providing transportation service to the great city of Brampton. As he is aware, Via Rail was cancelled and that is a federal jurisdiction. We certainly did not welcome that kind of announcement, either in Brampton or anywhere else across this province.

The member may be aware we are undergoing a transit study throughout Metro and the surrounding regions, and I hope to have the response of the committee back to me by the end of the year or so. We are certainly looking at a number of areas of expanding GO Transit service. We were looking at areas as recently as yesterday morning. It is very active and it is something we understand has to be proceeded with in a number of directions, including the northwest of Metropolitan Toronto and the surrounding area.

ONTARIO HOUSING CORP.

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. In August 1985, two months into the minister's tenure, changes were made to the Ontario Housing Corp. point rating system, eliminating the provision that gave points to applicants who had costs for medical care, transportation and special equipment not included in medical plans.

Why did the minister change the plan to make it more difficult for people with special medical needs and for the disabled?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will have to take that question and look at it in detail to see what the changes were that were involved there and to have a comparison. The member says I have made it more difficult; it is quite unlikely. With the kind of compassionate approach to what we have done to our housing and our clients, we would not have made it more difficult. I would ask the member to give me the details and I will look at them and compare them. I will assure the member that we are much more compassionate in our approach to our policy.

Mr. Jackson: I find it hard to believe that the minister refers to his compassionate decision. He made a political decision in August 1985.

Cosmas Gioris lives in Don Mills. He currently pays 78 per cent of his income for rent, and in

fact has the maximum points for income and shelter costs. Mr. Gioris, however, has a 10-year-old son with diabetes. The cost of medication for his son means that 92 per cent of Mr. Gioris's income is committed to a roof over his head and keeping his son alive, yet these additional costs are not taken into consideration for his OHC application.

Is the minister prepared to make the necessary adjustments to ensure that families like that of Cosmas Gioris are not penalized because of health problems or disabilities in Ontario today? Why did he change it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If there is anyone looking for political points, it is the honourable member over there. If he were so concerned about that individual, what he should have done is brought the case to me and let me look at it in its perspective. But, no, he stands in the House today and then asks me a general question, having the specifics there. He is the one who is playing politics. The member should give me the case and I will address that directly.

Mr. Jackson: Point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: I have been in conversation with his ministry for two weeks on this specific point.

Mr. Speaker: That is excellent. You may continue being in conversation with his ministry any other time.

Mr. Cousens: He does nothing.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Speaker, I believe—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Jackson: The point being raised by the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member take his seat.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment if he could be persuaded to sit in his seat long enough for me to address it to him.

Mr. Davis: He likes it over here. He is coming back.

Mrs. Grier: The environment is having to wait, so I suppose we can too.

Last week I asked the minister how he intended to deal with liquid industrial waste in this province. As usual, in his reply the minister referred to his municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program. The minister well knows that MISA does not cover 12,000 industries which discharge into municipal sewer systems.

Can the minister tell us whether he intends to set pre-treatment standards for the 11,700 industries which do not discharge their waste directly into the province's waterways?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member for Lakeshore, who is often accurate in the information she provides to the House, is perpetuating a myth that 11,700—I have heard other figures, but somewhere in that neighbourhood—of the discharges that take place in the municipal sewers are not addressed by the MISA program. She will recall that when I put out the MISA white paper it invited a response that looked not only at the direct discharges but also at the indirect discharges, those that would go into sewers.

There were two ways of looking at it. One was the sewage treatment plants and the upgrading of those. I think everyone would agree with the assessment that the sewage treatment plants alone, even with modifications and upgradings, would not deal as effectively with the discharges as if they were dealt with at source. Therefore, as she is aware, I have asked the MISA Advisory Committee, certainly with a large contingent of environmentalists on it, to report back to me on the appropriate manner in which to deal with these discharges. I expect the report this month.

They have not been forgotten. I understand they must be addressed. In many of my speeches I have mentioned that pre-treatment is one method and a uniform sewer bylaw across Ontario is another. Obviously, those are very significant sources and I have already said on many occasions that we are addressing those.

Mrs. Grier: Can the minister assure us that the manner in which he addresses this problem will ensure that the 50 per cent of the volume of waste now discharged by those 11,700 loopholes is in fact treated? Otherwise, does the minister not agree that he is creating an incentive for industries, which now discharge directly into waterways and which will be required to treat their waste, to change their method of discharge into the sanitary sewer system and therefore avoid having to do pre-treatment. How can he overcome that particular problem?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: This is precisely, of course, why we made comment on that in the white paper; why in the response to the white paper—and we received over 100 responses—why in our response to the responses, we indicated very clearly that we would be dealing with this issue. I am getting support from my friend the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) who, himself having anticipated the activity that will be taking place, has put a resolution forward which in fact

supports us. I welcome the support of the member for Brantford for this initiative.

I want to indicate to the member that we recognized the potential of what she is talking about, that is people saying, "If it is going to be too tough to discharge directly, let us discharge into sewers." That is precisely why we have the MISA Advisory Committee, headed by Dr. Douglas Hallett, a renowned toxicologist and environmentalist in Ontario, formerly with Environment Canada, and others on the committee who are certainly noted for their concern for the environment. They will be reporting to me on this.

I think the member has raised an important issue. I want to express my appreciation for her support of the efforts that we are taking, and those of the member for Brantford.

1500

NONSMOKERS' PROTECTION

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Premier. He knows that last month the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Jake Epp, made an attack on the problem of smoking in the work place in the federal civil service and in commissions and corporations controlled by the federal civil service. He also knows that I have Bill 71, which has been sitting in Orders and Notices since January 1, dealing with the whole issue of controlling smoking in the work place and the public place. Can he indicate to me his objections to Bill 71 or what his government intends to do about this very serious problem that is causing 35 people in Ontario to die prematurely today because no action is being taken?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the honourable member bringing this question up with me again, as he has done during our estimates and with a variety of different ministries and portfolios I hold. He now asks me the same question again. I can tell the honourable member that we have looked at his suggestions. In some regards they are constructive, but we are looking at all of its broad public policy ramifications. I can tell him that a great deal of attention is being spent on the issue by a variety of ministers on an interministerial basis. When we have reviewed every single detail of it, we will be happy to report back to the member about our plan for action.

Mr. Sterling: Unfortunately, the Premier never answers the question as to whether or not he has any objection to Bill 71. What does he say to Donna Bush of Markham, Ontario, who writes about secondhand smoke: "I was on medical

leave of absence from November 1985 to mid-January 1986 because of the work place secondhand smoke problem I now, once again, find myself in the same situation. I have been off work for over a week now as I write this letter. I have no idea how long I will be off this time. I have also made numerous trips to the doctor and hospital. My fate lies in the hands of the government at this point. Presently, smokers have a right to smoke and, because of this, I do not have the right to breathe"? How does the Premier answer Donna Bush?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not know any more of the circumstances of that particular case than what the member tells me. As he knows, a number of employers are taking initiatives with their employees on a voluntary basis. He is aware of those instances. Obviously, one of the things she can do is to talk to her employer and her fellow employees who may have the same concerns as well. I can tell the honourable member, as I have said before, that we are working on this situation and all of its broad implications and we will share that with the honourable member and Ms. Bush at the appropriate time.

HERITAGE LANGUAGES

Mr. Grande: My question is for the Minister of Education once again. It is in regard to the heritage languages program and the proposal the minister tabled yesterday in the Legislature. On page 4 of the minister's statement to the House, he said he was going to make sure that school boards were going to provide the heritage language if parents of 25 pupils made a request for it; in other words, no school board was going to be forced. The reason he will do this is that he has a deep commitment to educational equity; in other words, the old, equal educational opportunity we have been speaking of for many years.

Given this deep commitment he has, can he explain to us why in the full knowledge that Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan are teaching heritage languages during school hours, he has opted to deny children in Ontario that right and that equal educational opportunity?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Let me say to the honourable member that the situations among the provinces are not as the honourable member describes. We have 90,000 students enrolled in some 4,000 classes with some 58 heritage languages being taught in some 72 school jurisdictions. When one compares the size of our program with, for example, some of the western provinces and when one looks at the diverse

range of the offering in Ontario, one quickly understands that there are distinguishing characteristics that set the situations apart.

We as a government have said that we are going to move forward in terms of enriching and expanding the programs in so far as heritage languages are concerned. We are going to provide the mandate. We are going to enrich teacher support and curriculum development. We think we have struck a good balance between meeting the multicultural reality of a modern Ontario and ensuring that the important educational objectives this government has set for everyone in the Ontario school system are going to be met.

Mr. Grande: The minister, I think, is speaking without the facts and he is closing the door to thousands of kids in the province of Ontario learning their heritage languages and receiving a better education than they receive today through the medium of their heritage languages.

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary?

Mr. Grande: The minister of course knows that 13,473 children in Manitoba are receiving heritage languages during the school day. When one talks about 90,000 children in Ontario and compares that to the population of Manitoba, 13,000 sounds about right; there are one million in Manitoba. The point is—

Mr. Speaker: What is the question?

Mr. Grande: Since the educational ministry in Manitoba was able to come to grips with those concerns and those problems in order to implement this program, why is it that the province of Ontario cannot? That is the question.

Hon. Mr. Conway: When one looks at some of the western provinces, for example, one notes the number of heritage languages being offered is substantially fewer than those offered by some of our boards in Ontario which offer scores of heritage languages programs within their jurisdictions. What we have said is that we are going to maintain the option for boards to provide the heritage language programming in one of three areas, in the extended school day, after school, or on weekends.

We think that represents a very fair balance between the concerns of the multicultural community on one hand and all those who are charged with operating a very significant and diverse school system, who have also the responsibility of meeting the financial requirements and the logistical concerns that the

member for Oakwood merrily breezes past without having any real understanding of them.

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Mr. Gordon: Can the Minister of Labour confirm with regard to the new regulations he has brought in for domestics that the 20,000 live-in domestics in Ontario can expect to receive either time off or overtime pay when they work overtime?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Yes, I can confirm that, and I said that in my statement. At the consent of both parties, the time and a half may be paid in an hour and a half off for each hour of overtime worked; in other words, time and a half off in lieu of overtime pay.

Mr. Gordon: I would like to inform the minister that Judith Ramirez of the International Coalition to End Domestics' Exploitation is very disappointed with this initiative on the part of the minister. As far as she is concerned, the minister is just putting domestic workers into a ghetto. He is not treating them the same as other workers in Ontario, and he is taking those immigrant women, those 20,000 live-in domestics—

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary is?

Mr. Gordon: —and he is leaving them out in the cold. This is completely wrong. Is he not really putting these people in a ghetto?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: As matters proceed during the rest of the month and other reports come forward, one will see there are proposals to move in this direction. I just want to say to my honourable friend that all of these problems we have dealt with today were problems which faced the member's government during its first term. The difference between this government and his government is we acted.

1510

WESTERN COAL

Mr. Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Energy. Last week, in his response to my question to him on Ontario Hydro's use of low-sulphur western coal, the minister responded by informing the House that Hydro was already buying three million tons a year, a fact most of us have known for several years now, but he mentioned in that response the fact that Hydro was paying a \$70 million premium for that western coal. I would like to ask the Minister of Energy whether in consultation with his colleague the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio), he has discovered the costs of burning one ton of high-sulphur coal in terms of

environmental damage to our lakes, forests, fish stocks, wildlife, buildings and agricultural crops in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: No, I certainly did not examine that aspect of it. What I shared with the honourable member when he asked the question was the fact that Ontario Hydro is paying \$70 million extra to burn western coal, and that in addition to that, Ontario Hydro had to make substantial investments in new coal cars to carry the coal from the west. We have had substantial involvement in mixing facilities at Atikokan and other places. We have had investments in ships. I was trying to prove to the honourable member that Ontario is indeed a province that is willing to co-operate with other provinces across Canada to see where we can be helpful to each other.

The aspect the member talks about certainly is addressed by the new initiatives of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley). We have concerns about the acid gas emissions and we are definitely doing things about them to cut back on the acid emissions. I just feel very badly that with all the initiatives being taken by this government, we are not getting the same kind of response from our American friends.

Mr. Charlton: That is precisely part of the problem. The minister said in his response last week, "Yes, we are considering the environmental aspects and what we can do to help the western provinces, but we also have to consider Ontario consumers." Does the minister not think that perhaps it is time those two ministries co-operated with each other to discover what would really help Ontario consumers? It is the consumers of this province who pay the shot for the environmental damage as well as for Hydro rates. Does the minister not think it is time he found out the real cost per ton of environmental damage so the people of this province can make some real and honest decisions?

Mr. Speaker: The question has been asked twice.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I do not think there are two ministers in the cabinet who co-operate more than the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Natural Resources.

Having said that, I cannot believe my response was one the member would not accept. In fact, we are trying to examine what the costs are. We are doing something about it. This is the problem we have with our American friends. They are saying: "Wait; we do not know what the problems are. We are not sure acid rain is having the impact Mr. Bradley is talking about." But the Minister of the Environment knows the impact

and I know the impact and the member knows the impact. This government is doing more about this than any other government on the continent of North America.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications. Given the fact that there are millions of GO Transit commuters in Ontario who are already paying as much as \$2,500 each annually just to get to work and home again, will the minister assure these commuters that a proposed additional charge for parking at GO train stations, estimated to cost between \$1 million and \$2 million, will not be instituted by his government?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I will undertake to the member to attempt to check out his sources. I am not aware that the board is attempting to put in place a parking fee but I will certainly undertake to find out for the member and report back to him.

Mr. Jackson: I am surprised the minister seems that ill-informed, given that his own ministry is out, even at public hearings, discussing the fact that this proposal is under active consideration. The minister himself has been privy to meetings where the matter has been discussed. I am merely asking the minister to state today in this Legislature for the record for all those millions of commuters in Ontario that he and his government will not consider such a recommendation for those commuters.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: If the matter is under review as the member alleges, we will certainly review it. I will be more than happy to get back to the member.

FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Solicitor General, if he can return to his seat. In the light of the letter dated May 29 to me from the Solicitor General, in which he says, "I am convinced of the need to provide small municipalities with financial assistance to acquire expensive firefighting equipment," and in the light of the letters the ministry has sent to the very many municipalities in reply to past resolutions requesting the implementation of the resolution that was passed unanimously by this House, can the minister tell us when he expects the government will implement a program of providing financial assistance for expensive firefighting equipment for small municipalities in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The honourable member knows that budget time has gone by at the

moment, as announced, but we are always looking to see how we can augment those services for smaller municipalities. Perhaps we can obtain some assistance from the member opposite during the estimates process.

USE OF TIME IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired. The members may be happy to know that we have reached a new objective today during question period. There were 19 questions and 22 supplementaries today.

PETITION

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. McLean: I have a petition.

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funding for a haemo-dialysis unit at one of the hospitals in Peterborough."

It is signed by residents of the Norwood, Asphodel area.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of the whole.

PAY EQUITY ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ SALARIALE

Consideration of Bill 154, An Act to provide for Pay Equity.

Etude du projet de loi 154, Loi portant établissement de l'équité salariale.

Mr. Chairman: We have in front of us Bill 154. Are there any comments, questions or amendments that any honourable member wants to make, and if so, to what section?

1520

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I wonder whether I might suggest to the committee that in the unlikely event there are any differences of opinion on any amendments, we might stack the votes until 5:45 p.m., at which time we could deal with them by an aye or nay or by some other method.

Mr. Chairman: Is there unanimous consent to stack votes until 5:45 this afternoon?

Agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Do the members have any comments, questions or amendments; and if so, to what section?

Mr. Baetz: How are we planning to proceed? Are we going section to section to section—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Yes.

Mr. Baetz: —or are going to go back and forth?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We would never do that.

Mr. Baetz: Starting with definitions and moving methodically forward, ever forward?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: This is committee of the whole House and not estimates.

Mr. Baetz: I just wanted to have that confirmed.

Ms. Gigantes: Mr. Chairman, we have a series of amendments and I believe you have copies of them. We have not received any notice of amendments from the Conservative Party. We, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, will be placing motions to the bill. We have not received any indication whether the Conservative Party intends to place motions. We have received no copies of such motions.

Mr. Baetz: Mr. Chairman, I can assure you and the member from the New Democratic Party that we will indeed be introducing amendments. They are now being run off and we will be circulating them within the next few minutes. They are hot off the press. It shows how very carefully we have considered these amendments. They are just about to come. We will have about six or seven, unlike the cartload we are expecting from the party to my left.

Mr. Chairman: Does the member for Ottawa Centre wish me now to go through her list of amendments?

Ms. Gigantes: When the Conservatives have not provided other people in this Legislature with copies of the amendments they intend to put I wonder how we can follow your guidance, which is that we start at the beginning of the bill and move through it.

Mr. Chairman: The process we are in right now is only one of finding out on which sections there are any amendments, questions or comments, not the merits and not moving the motions at this time.

Ms. Gigantes: I will list the amendments we intend to put. We have an amendment to subsection 1(1), a second amendment to subsection 1(1) and a third amendment to subsection 1(1). These affect definitions within the bill. We have an amendment to subsection 3(1). We have an amendment to subsection 7(3) and an amendment to subsection 7(4).

Mr. Chairman: Sorry. Subsection 3(1)?

Ms. Gigantes: Subsection 3(1).

Mr. Chairman: Subsection 3(2)?

Ms. Gigantes: We will recommend people vote against subsection 3(2) if our amendment to subsection 3(1) carries.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Subsection 7(3)—

Ms. Gigantes: Subsections 7(3) and 7(4). We would recommend voting against subsections 8(2), 8(3) and 8(4). We have an amendment to subsection 9(1). We have an amendment to clauses 10(b), (c) and (d). We have an amendment to subsection 11(1). We have an amendment to subclauses 13(2)(e)(ii) to (v), to subsection 13(7), to section 18, a recommendation to vote against section 21 and a recommendation to amend clauses 34(2a), (2b) and (2c).

Mr. Chairman: That is according to the copies I have. There are also certain government motions.

Mr. Baetz: And motions from the official opposition.

Mr. Chairman: Perhaps the parliamentary assistant will indicate the government motions.

Mr. Ward: The government has an amendment to section 2, and a recommendation that members vote against section 32 as it is redundant.

Mr. Baetz: We will be introducing amendments.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have copies of them?

Mr. Baetz: They now are being distributed. I should say that we had anticipated Bill 54 was going to go first this afternoon. Had that happened, we would have been ready and would have had our amendments circulated. I apologize but the fault is not entirely with us.

Mr. Chairman: That is Bill 34.

Mr. Baetz: Bill 34; whatever. There is another bill.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, thank you. We now have copies of amendments that I think the member is going to go through and confirm. Section 1—is that subsection 1(6)?

Mr. Baetz: It is section 1. We will be introducing an amendment, section 1a. Again under section 1, we will be calling for substitution of subsection 1(6).

Under section 6, we will be proposing that we add a new subsection 6(1a). Again under section 6, we will be moving that subsection 6(4) of the bill be amended by adding a new clause (c).

Under clause 8(1)(f), we will be moving that the bill be amended by adding thereto the following clause, and that is (f).

Under section 14, we will moving that section 14 of the bill be amended. Under section 16, we will be moving that section 16 of the bill be amended. Under section 22, we will be moving that section 22 of the bill be amended.

We will be moving that section 35 be struck out and a substitution made therefor. That is it for now.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, I have all of those. Are there any other comments, questions or amendments that members wish to put to any sections? There appear to be none. Nothing can be carried until the first amendment. The first amendment appears to be that of Ms. Gigantes to subsection 1(1).

On section 1:

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that the definition of “employee” in subsection 1(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“‘Employee’ includes an employee of a contractor or a subcontractor performing work or services for the employer, but does not include a student employed for his or her vacation period.”

Ms. Gigantes: The purpose of this amendment is to make sure that employers take responsibility under this legislation for employees who are at arm’s length. This bill has its flaws in terms of its lack of coverage for women who are at work in Ontario, which we will address by other amendments. While we can say that the bill is ineffective in some ways, there are also some ways in which the bill is downright dangerous as far as women are concerned in Ontario. I will just elaborate a bit on my fears on this point.

The bill says that employers, given certain formulas, strictures and mechanisms provided by the legislation, shall have to take account of positions and whether they are being paid equitably. They shall have to make comparisons or allow comparisons to be made in a complaint to the Pay Equity Commission of Ontario, which will be adjudicated by the pay equity tribunal, but only if those employees are regular employees in one way or another.

1530

We know there has been a tendency for employers in Ontario, for a number of reasons and in a number of ways, to get rid of responsibilities for employees by contracting out services. This happens in many areas of work in Ontario where even very large firms have turned to the option of contracting out services so they do not have to pay the kinds of wages they have been paying, the kinds of benefits they have been

paying, and so on, for such services as cleaning, kitchen help, the provision of food, etc. Every day of every month in Ontario we see an increasing tendency on the part of employers to use the contracting-out method of getting rid of what responsibilities they held previously in their relationship with dozens, hundreds, of employees.

If this legislation goes ahead in its present form, there will be an added incentive for employers to contract out services. If an employer can avoid responsibility for providing pay equity and for working within the mechanisms of this legislation by getting rid of those responsibilities through the process of contracting out, the employer will have an incentive to do so. It is a temptation this legislation puts before employers. It is a new level of temptation.

There has been enough temptation in the past so that we have had problems right across Ontario, both in the public sector and in the private sector. For us now to close our eyes to that pattern and to say it does not make any difference if we say contracted-out positions are not covered by this legislation, is to wilfully deny the realities of work life in Ontario. If we leave this loophole open and invite employers to take advantage of it, we are undermining the work situation for hundreds and thousands of women in this province.

I think every legislator who knows what has been happening in the work force in his or her area and right across this province will want to look at this provision very closely to make sure that once this legislation has been passed by the Legislature there will not be an added inducement to employers to contract out.

It is the purpose of our amendment to say that where contracting out takes place, the employer who contracts out for a service will still have to take responsibility under the tenets of this legislation for providing pay equity for employees who are employed at arm's length.

Mr. Ward: I believe this issue was discussed, perhaps not in the specific context of the amendment that is before us today, but the whole issue of the employees of contractors and contracting out was discussed during the course of the committee hearings and the subsequent clause-by-clause debate.

I merely want to state that we do not support this amendment. The employees of contractors are covered by the pay equity legislation as employees of the contractor as the employer. The amendment put before us has the impact of making those employees, for the purposes of

comparison, in effect the employees of the person who contracts for these services.

Ms. Gigantes: The parliamentary assistant is looking at an amendment which was brought to the standing committee on administration of justice. He should be familiar with it; it is word for word the amendment we considered in the justice committee. I had hoped that in the passage of time since he would have thought a bit more on this subject, and I still hope to be able to convince him on this subject.

He points out quite rightly that under the legislation the contract employer—the person who is providing contracted services—would have a responsibility to provide pay equity if the firm were of a certain size, and if there were job comparisons as laid out in the formulas of the bill would have a responsibility to provide pay equity under this legislation for the employees engaged in the contracted services.

However, let me ask the parliamentary assistant whether he is familiar with what happens in contracted-out services. I know that in the area I come from in Ottawa, when a hospital, for example, has contracted out cleaning services, what happens is that longtime employees lose about \$3 an hour. They are put in a situation where they are not unionized any more. They have to become unionized again under a new employer who is the contractor, and they lose benefits they had previously. They lose a lot, not just in terms of pay but in terms of the security of their work situation and all the benefits that have maybe been associated for years with that work situation.

Furthermore, if the person who is providing contracted services—the new employer of these people—is to provide pay equity, with whom are they to be compared? With other people doing contracted services at the lower rate. That means the person who has been cleaning in a hospital for 10 or 15 years at a certain level of pay, in a certain kind of stable position in terms of employment and with certain benefits now, suddenly becomes the employee—if he or she is lucky—of the person who is providing contracted services at a rate where, if those people are to be compared with each other under their new employer, there will not be any kind of comparison with the situation in which they have always worked.

That is precisely why the hospital or the major employer will choose, under this legislation, to find a new reason—yet a new reason—for contracting out services. What we are adding to the work situation of women in Ontario if we pass the bill without this amendment is a new incentive

for employers to get rid of employees who may have long standing in the work place, to get rid of them for yet another reason, which is that they would have to take responsibility for them in terms of pay equity.

Is the parliamentary assistant aware of cases like this? Does he think it is fair that we should be leaving this kind of incentive for employers to increase the level of contracting out? Does he not agree that it provides an incentive?

Mr. Ward: I do not necessarily agree it provides an incentive. The whole point of the pay equity legislation is that female employees within an establishment have the ability to draw on comparisons within that establishment for the purpose of achieving wage adjustments that achieve pay equity. I will not deny the concern the member for Ottawa Centre may have in general terms regarding the whole issue of contracting out, but I do not believe this bill is the appropriate forum or format to address those concerns.

This bill is designed to provide for wage adjustments within an establishment on the basis of job comparisons within that establishment. I really do believe that the issue the member for Ottawa Centre draws to our attention is a valid issue, but I will not concede it is an issue that solely relates to pay equity and occupational segregation.

1540

Ms. Gigantes: Let me try one more time. The parliamentary assistant is quite correct in saying that the problem of contracting out, which is a widespread one and which disrupts the lives and the work situations of hundreds and thousands of employees right across Ontario, men and women included, is not one that is going to be solved through this bill. Can he deny that if we leave the definition that currently sits in the bill, there will be yet another reason for employers to choose the method of contracting out in order to avoid obligations to employees?

Mr. Ward: Quite simply, no, I do not believe so. I believe that if there is an incentive that exists within the establishment to contract out, that incentive exists regardless of Bill 154.

Ms. Gigantes: I draw to his attention that there are now professional firms engaged in telling employers exactly the opposite. In fact, there is one legal firm which has come to my attention recently, Weir and Foulds, which put out a client news bulletin dated April 1986 in which it draws to the attention of employers the following: "Employment practices such as con-

tracting out, hiring, promotion, termination will have a significant impact on the number of employees within a job class." Obviously, people who are giving advice to employers in this province are well aware of this loophole.

I think the parliamentary assistant is being disingenuous if he is suggesting to us this does not add to the employer incentive to contract out and disrupt further the work situations of a significant number of women in this province.

Mr. Baetz: I have heard this argument to and fro, both in the justice committee and again here today. I must say I cannot help but support the views of the parliamentary assistant on this, to the extent that contracting out is a problem, and nobody will deny there may be some problems there, but to the extent it is, this is definitely the wrong piece of legislation to deal with that particular issue. Therefore I must say I cannot support the views of the New Democrats on this one.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any further comments on this proposed amendment by the member for Ottawa Centre? There being none, shall the amendment to subsection 1(1), the change in the definition of "employee," carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

Mr. Wildman: That is an anticipatory demand for a vote.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: May I point out to the committee, so that we do not have the troubles we had yesterday, that even today, after yesterday, there was hardly a nay squeaked out when I asked about it being carried.

Mr. Wildman: That just means people want it to carry.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Obviously I was not speaking to members of the third party. The next one I have is an amendment by Ms. Gigantes to subsection 1(1), the definition of "female job class."

Ms. Gigantes moves that the definition of "female job class" in subsection 1(1) of the bill be amended by striking out "60 per cent or more" in clause (a) and inserting in lieu thereof "a majority."

Ms. Gigantes: As members are aware, this legislation sets up a preliminary test for the beginning of job comparisons, either within a plan in the first phase of the bill or in a complaint in the second phase of the bill. That test is set out by saying that women may ask for a job

comparison with their male colleagues or to have their job class compared with another job class in the work place if the female job class has at least 60 per cent female incumbents.

This is a way of screening out job comparisons in the mechanisms of the bill. It is one which will limit, inhibit and restrict the number of job comparisons that women in the work place can ask for within their own work place. We do not know how many women will be screened out by that process, women who should have their jobs compared.

I would like to ask the parliamentary assistant, as he considers this matter once again, whether at this stage the government has managed to come up with any estimates of how many women who might otherwise have their jobs compared with other jobs within their own work place will be screened out of that process and screened out of the effective provision of pay equity under this legislation by the imposition of the test of 60 per cent female occupancy of a female job class.

Mr. Ward: I do not believe that the threshold numbers or percentages that are established for arriving at a definition of female or male job class eliminate any female employee from comparison under this legislation. I know this is an area where the member for Ottawa Centre and I have disagreed in the past. I will once again refer the member to subsection 1(5), which is the historical incumbency clause.

Simply put, that section states, "In deciding or agreeing whether a job class is a female job class or a male job class, regard shall be had to the historical incumbency of the job class." In other words, if a job is a traditionally female job and it happens not to be occupied by the percentages that are indicated in the definition for the purposes of the proactive model, then I do not believe the coverage is denied because of the fallback from subsection 1(5).

Ms. Gigantes: If the parliamentary assistant truly believes that nobody is going to be screened out by that percentage, then why have we got it in the bill?

Mr. Ward: The reason that the 60-70 per cent limits are in the bill, as I thought I had stated previously, is because this legislation is, I understand, one of the few—if not the only—proactive pieces of legislation for the private sector in the western world. The reason for establishing the 60-70 per cent threshold limits was so that those employers would be able to easily identify male and female job classes for the purposes of making their comparisons. In fact, it sets out a hard-and-fast objective test to do that.

Again, subsection 1(5) is a catch-all that does provide access for female employees who may not find themselves caught by those threshold limits; therefore, they will still be able to access coverage under that.

Mr. Barlow: If it is the case, as the parliamentary assistant just said, that it is there for clarifying the 60-70 per cent, which I am sure we will hear an amendment on, why cloud it with subsection 1(5) then? Why cloud it by saying that, on the one hand, you have to have 60 per cent but, on the other hand, historical incumbency is an answer? It is another invitation for this whole bill to go before the courts.

1550

Mr. Ward: Frankly, I do not think that subsection 1(5) clouds the issue at all. The whole point is that in a small establishment, for instance, if it were just left at the 60 and 70 per cent without subsection 1(5), I suppose an employer could go out and hire a couple of males to perform jobs that are traditionally associated on the basis of historical incumbency with being a female job and try to get around coverage under the bill. Frankly, subsection 1(5) is there to prevent that.

Ms. Gigantes: The parliamentary assistant has stated the problem, and that is that employers can manipulate their hiring so that the definition of a female job class and the further definition of a male job class, which we will come to in a moment, can easily be manipulated.

We had presentations before the standing committee on administration of justice by representatives of workers at a university, for example, who pointed out that the most reasonable job comparisons within the staff at the university could easily become a question of contention under subsection 5 by the manipulations in terms of hirings or job definition of two employees.

The parliamentary assistant shrugs, "Oh, of course that would not happen." Of course it will happen. It is exactly what will happen. We had people quite experienced in labour legislation before us, who make their living precisely out of those fine little distinctions that employers can play around with in terms of labour rights, who told us: "You can expect it. That is what is going to happen."

What the parliamentary assistant says to us is: "We define it as 60 per cent females in a female job class and 70 per cent males in a male job class. Then if there are any problems around that, we can refer the employees to section 5, which says if the historical incumbency of a job class has been female or male, then you have a

complaint to make to the commission, which will have to make a determination about whether the historical incumbency really makes this a female job class or a male job class."

Perhaps that is all very well and good for the people who came before us and talked about their real work situation at the university. They at least have a staff association. But let me point out that for 1.6 million women in this province, there ain't no labour union to go to out there and help them put together the numbers, get familiar with subsection 5 and how they can argue historical incumbency, offer them a little legal advice on the side and tell them how to make a complaint to the commission.

What we are saying is that 1.6 million women out there in the work force are going to have to figure all this out for themselves. If their employers drop three males from one job class and add three females to another job class and manage to avoid the 60-70 per cent test that has been set up in this legislation for a job comparison, they are going to be stuck on their own trying to wade through this legislation and make an argument that there is a historical incumbency to the job class in which they work.

It is another invitation for employers to have fun and games with this legislation, to manoeuvre their way around this legislation and to screen women out of the effectiveness of this legislation.

What we are proposing is a very simple amendment which says that if there is a majority of women in a job class, it should be called a female job class. We will further propose that if there is a majority of men in a job class, it should be called a male job class. At least there you are getting down to numbers you can talk about.

Women make up close to 50 per cent of the work force in Ontario. This 60-70 per cent test is totally arbitrary. It may have had some kind of justification in other jurisdictions. The parliamentary assistant will be saying to us, I am sure, that it has been used in other jurisdictions. There is no reason for us to use it here. There is absolutely no indication he can give us of why it is suitable to the work force in Ontario. He tells us it will not screen people out. I think he is being naïve; he is either being naïve or he is blinding himself to reality.

Mr. Ward: I cannot resist one more attempt at trying to convince the member for Ottawa Centre that with this amendment and her consistent position—a position, I might add, that probably could achieve some consensus—frankly, I think her amendment serves neither private sector

employers who have to make the determination nor female workers.

She points out that any threshold limit is subject to manipulation and then attempts to substitute one threshold limit for another, that being 50 per cent instead of 60 per cent or 70 per cent. She points out that it is a much lower test and she talks about the 1.6 million working women not represented by unions.

I would point out that during the course of our committee's consideration of this, the member's solution to this perceived problem was to leave the whole issue of determination of female or male job class to some sort of battleground between the employer and the employee, solely on the basis of historical incumbency.

I really wonder, in response to the member for Ottawa Centre, how she can honestly say she believes that those unrepresented working women are going to have any easier task in establishing the historical incumbency definition of a female or male job class than they are with fixed threshold limits. Frankly, I have a great deal of difficulty in seeing any logic whatsoever in the member's argument.

Ms. Gigantes: One final word on this. Although we may have further contributions by the parliamentary assistant, I will try to limit what I have to say. Obviously, he is unconvinced.

If I can jump four feet and somebody says to me, "Jump four feet, five inches," then he has set up a threshold, a test, that I am not going to be able to pass. I suggest that if we move the threshold back, as we have done here in what seems to me to be a reasonable proposal, it is going to be easier for people to get over that test, that screening-out process.

Furthermore, the parliamentary assistant clearly has not understood the process, which was a much more complex one, that we proposed during consideration by the standing committee on administration of justice. We have made every attempt here today to put our amendments in the clearest, simplest fashion, assuming that for the major part this legislation would stand as it is. We have looked to try to remedy the largest defects we see in the legislation. This clearly is one of them.

It is such a large defect that, as is widely known, the former spokesperson on women's issues for the Conservative caucus felt forced to leave that position when she could not get support from her caucus to get rid of this test. She felt this screening process set up in the bill was one which was inexcusable and which she on

principle had to oppose. She could not get support from the rest of her caucus on that, or at least a majority of her caucus, and she went so far as to resign as the women's issues critic, for which I have to express my admiration.

It is certainly a significant matter and the parliamentary assistant should not treat it as if it were not.

Mr. Ward: First, I just want to reiterate that I do not believe the amendment as put forward does anything to enhance the coverage of female employees. Second, I think the amendment as proposed makes it even more difficult for those private sector employers to make the determinations as to the job class comparisons they must make.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Ms. Gigantes's amendment regarding the definition of "female job class" carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

1600

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that the definition of "male job class" in subsection 1(1) of the bill be amended by striking out "70 per cent or more" in clause (a) and inserting in lieu thereof "a majority."

Ms. Gigantes: The reason for this amendment has been addressed in the previous discussion surrounding the definition of "female job class." I would just like to ask the parliamentary assistant why it is a female job class if it has 60 per cent females, but in order to be a male job class it has to be 70 per cent males.

Mr. Ward: Threshold limits were arrived at on the basis of the breakdown and representation within the work force of male and female employees, 45 per cent full-time employees being female and 55 per cent male. Threshold limits reflect that sort of breakdown.

Ms. Gigantes: I would be quite willing to have a subamendment come forward that said 55 per cent instead of 70 per cent males. Is he proposing that to us?

Mr. Ward: No.

Ms. Gigantes: Why not?

Mr. Ward: Because. I think I have already given the argument.

Frankly, I do not think this whole exercise of trying to barter a different threshold limit is particularly appropriate at this stage. We had a good discussion on this in committee. We have

had a good discussion on this with regard to the last amendment relating to the definition of "female job class."

I think I have explained the government's position as clearly as I can to the member for Ottawa Centre. I do not believe her amendment achieves what she hopes it will achieve. I have been unable to convince her and, quite frankly, she is unable to convince me otherwise. I suggest that nothing is served by prolonging the debate on this one when we have already just discussed the very same item.

Ms. Gigantes: I am sorry the parliamentary assistant is feeling impatient on this, but in truth, I have never heard the government say the reason for a 60-70 per cent comparison test was that the makeup of the work force was 45 per cent female and 55 per cent male. That is an entirely new proposition from the government.

If that is the basis on which these comparison tests were set up, I really do not understand why they were not set up on the basis of 45 per cent female occupancy for a female job class and 55 per cent male occupancy for a male job class. I do not think we have had an explanation of that.

What we are suggesting in this amendment, and the parliamentary assistant can accept this amendment without having had to accept the previous amendment dealing with the female job class, is the lowering by 20 per cent of the male occupancy required before a female job can be compared to a male job class. What we are asking for is a lowering of the threshold.

The parliamentary assistant has said it will make life easier for employers. In fact, it may complicate their lives, because they may be tempted to try to weasel around these threshold limits. It will be easier to weasel around them at a 70 per cent level than at a 50 per cent level, let me point out to the parliamentary assistant. But he can accept this amendment, even though he has not accepted the previous one, and it would make a great deal of difference to the number of women who will have this legislation work for them in terms of having job comparisons available under this legislation.

Mr. Ward: I do not believe an employer can manipulate or weasel around the threshold limits that are established in this bill because of subsection 1(5), and I would point out to my colleague the member for Ottawa Centre that how the threshold limits were arrived at certainly has been no secret. I believe this matter was discussed during the consideration of Bill 105; in fact, I believe it is part and parcel of the information that has been put out in some of the

pay equity fact sheets that have been produced by the Ontario women's directorate during the course of this.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Ms. Gigantes's amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: There is an amendment to subsection 1(6) by the member for Ottawa West.

Mr. Baetz: Yes. I move that section 1 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

"(1a) For the purposes of this act, the employees of an employer in the construction industry"—

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me. Really, we should be moving subsection 1(6) before subsection 1(1a), because it will come before it in the bill. You are trying to substitute something for subsection 1(6); that would come before subsection 1(1a).

Mr. Baetz moves that subsection 1(6) of the bill be struck out and the following be substituted therefor:

"1(6) A job class shall consist of not fewer than five positions."

Mr. Baetz: I would simply like to make one final plea on this particular amendment that a job class should consist of not fewer than five positions. As the bill now stands, it is reduced to a minimum of one position. I have pointed out on a number of occasions in committee that this is one of the sections that the private sector employers simply do not understand. They find it ridiculous to speak in terms of groups of a minimum of one.

As I have noted earlier, to be acceptable, any good legislation has to be, first of all, understood and, second, respected. It is our view that if the employers of this province are going to deal with legislation that speaks of a minimum group of one—a group of one, if we can try to conceptualize that—they will not understand it and they will not respect it. For this reason, we propose a minimum of five.

I believe in Manitoba the minimum incumbency is 10. Why we have reduced it ad absurdum to one is something we simply cannot understand. Because of this, particularly on behalf of the employers of Ontario who are going to be very important players in this legislation, we would again consider reducing the minimum number in the group to five and not speak in that ridiculous manner of a group of one.

1610

Ms. Gigantes: I may have missed something but I believe this is the first time I have ever heard a member of the Conservative Party stand in this Legislature and say that because something was done in Manitoba, particularly by the New Democratic government of Manitoba, it ought to be done here. I point out to the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz) that the legislation in Manitoba was set up after a study of the public service, which it addresses. It does not address the private sector. Legislation addressing the private sector and pay equity in the private sector is due to be tabled within weeks or months in Manitoba; it was promised in the last speech from the throne. There are lots of other items on which we would like to take leadership from Manitoba, but this is not one.

The question of minimum incumbency for a job class is really a pernicious one. I would like to ask the member for Ottawa West how many women would be screened out with this additional test he put up, which would be another barrier to the job comparisons that would be available to working women in Ontario under this legislation. How many would it screen out?

Mr. Baetz: To reply to the member for Ottawa Centre's comment that she has never heard our party speak in a complimentary fashion about the current government in Manitoba, this of course indicates that when that government does the occasional good thing, we are prepared to listen to it, to follow suit and to adapt it here.

The other point she makes is that the minimum incumbency of 10 applies only to the public sector in Manitoba. If the minimum incumbency of 10 applies to the public sector, which is more readily manageable and which can implement this kind of legislation more readily, then surely it makes far more sense to have a similar minimum incumbency applied to the private sector, which is far more fragmented, making it, as everybody has recognized, far more difficult to implement this kind of legislation there. I think there is a strong case to be made here, not perhaps to keep it at the level of 10 but at least to reduce it to the level of five.

The other question of how many women might possibly find themselves screened out through various devious ways and so forth is of course a point of concern here. If we start to fool around with these minimum incumbency levels, we can very easily find that companies in future will not hire women for the job where they may have traditionally hired women, simply to avoid this kind of comparison.

Mr. Wildman: Do you think employers are that devious?

Mr. Baetz: The member asked me whether employers are that devious. I must say that in the many weeks we sat and heard presentations from employers, I never in my life saw any group of people so spooked by what they thought were devious employers, bad-apple employers, employers who were going to hire the best lawyers they possibly could to avoid in one way or another what this legislation is intended to do.

Mr. Barlow: I would like to speak in support of the amendment, which may not come as a great surprise. I totally agree with what my colleague the member for Ottawa West has suggested. To shave this down to an incumbency of one person, with one person being able to form a group, is totally out of touch with reality in my opinion and in the opinion of many of the employer groups with which we have had the opportunity to speak and which have had the opportunity to come before the committee. The members will recall that many of the employer groups before the committee were asking that it be an incumbency level of 10 employees. In discussing—

Mr. Wildman: How about 40?

Mr. Barlow: No, 10 would be a realistic number. However, in discussing it further with the employer groups, we did come to the conclusion that, realistically, five could be acceptable. After all, the whole piece of legislation—I do not think it comes as any surprise—is a bad piece of legislation and we are trying to improve it. In any amendments we are putting forward, we are trying to improve this for the parliamentary assistant.

This is one I feel can certainly help to improve the act so it that it will be understandable for the employers of the province, and certainly for the workers, those who supposedly are to be helped by this act, the female work force. To put a roadblock or a position of a minimum incumbency of one is just going to create problems and create work for the employment standards branch, and this is something we will talk about a little bit later on. If it happens to go with what the socialist coalition has formulated in bringing in a brand-new level of bureaucracy, then that new level of bureaucracy is going to have to deal with this matter on many different occasions. I am simply saying I am opposed to the printed bill and I certainly support the amendment that has been put forward by my colleague.

Mr. Ward: Some reference was made to the legislation in Manitoba. I point out that in the

situation of Manitoba, with an incumbency rule of 10, the circumstance arose that a hospital of 5,000 employees was unable to make a single job comparison with a minimum incumbency rule of 10, because it could not find a male job class that was occupied by more than 10 employees. I really think the effect of this amendment is to exclude literally hundreds of thousands of women from coverage under this legislation and therefore we do not support it. I think it does point out how much stronger this legislation is than that which is in place in Manitoba, not just on this particular issue but also on many others.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Mr. Baetz's amendment to subsection 1(6) of the bill carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Baetz moves that section 1 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

"(1a) For the purposes of this act, the employees of an employer in the construction industry, as defined in the Labour Relations Act, who work at construction sites in a geographic division and the employees of the employer in the same geographic division who do not work at construction sites shall be deemed to be in two separate establishments."

Mr. Baetz: As we pointed out in the justice committee deliberations, and again a few days ago here, this is one of the very major points of contention that not only the construction industry, which is a very big and important industry in this province, has about this legislation, but it is also a point of view that is supported by many others in the private sector, including the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and many others.

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It is simply that as the Sibson and Company study, which took a detailed look at this whole question of comparing onsite construction employees in the construction field with those who are working in the offices, clearly showed, office workers' and site tradesmen's employment are based on entirely different relationships with the employer. As we know, the construction tradesmen, who are both unionized and nonunionized, are paid very well in Ontario, but that is a reflection of the temporary nature of the job, the seasonal nature of the industry, exposure to the elements, the high safety risk and the strength of the provincially based trade negotiations.

Furthermore, the unionized contractor, and this is very important, has no say over the rates he pays his unionized tradesmen. They are determined by the—

Mr. Wildman: They negotiate.

Mr. Baetz: No, they are determined by the province-wide negotiations on a regular basis and that, as we all know, is in sharp contrast to the employment of the office staff, both male and female. Office staff, of course, as we also know, are more likely to be employed on an ongoing basis than on a seasonal basis, which is the case with most of the onsite construction employees.

So really, the result of this amendment is not to exempt the entire construction industry at all. That is not the intent of this, but it would incorporate a more functional definition of “establishment” that recognizes the substantial differences between the construction site and the office. Even though they happen to be within the construction industry, these really are, for purposes of this legislation, not really comparable.

Of course, the pay equity comparisons would still be made within the construction offices and the employees there. The benefits of the construction employees onsite are negotiated at a province-wide level and the construction industry as a whole would be included in this legislation, so we make this final plea on behalf of the construction associations that we recognize that it is simply not valid and not fair and that it makes no sense to compare the jobs of construction onsite workers with those offsite and mainly in the offices.

Ms. Gigantes: We will not be supporting this amendment. The arguments have been made before by the construction association and construction industry representatives. The member for Ottawa West says the purpose of the amendment is not to exempt the construction industry but that would be the effect of the amendment, whether that is his purpose or not. If that is not his purpose, I do not know what he is doing putting it forward. I can see no reason in principle why under this legislation we should not be comparing the work done by people in the head office or the office of a construction company with those who are working on a construction site.

There will be some of the complexities of argument that we have had suggested by the member for Ottawa West, but in principle, when you compare skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of jobs in an office with jobs—whether they are outside on the grounds of

a university or people who are providing offsite services to a hospital—I do not see any reason why we should be making an exemption for the construction industry as he has proposed here.

The comparisons will be limited by the very nature of the difference in jobs. However, there is no reason in principle to set up a barrier to those comparisons. He says there is a different relationship between the employer and those employees who work in the office and the employer and those employees who work on the job site in construction firms. You bet there is. In one case we are dealing mainly with female workers and in the other case we are dealing mainly with male workers. That is precisely what this legislation is supposed to address.

Whenever we hear the phrase “functional definition” of a job, we have to be alert to the fact that what is being suggested is that when there is a functional definition there is noncomparability somehow. This word “functional” is newspeak or a euphemism that is meant to cover: “No, we will not compare those jobs because those jobs are done by women in one setting and men in another and functionally they are different. Vive la différence.”

Function, function, for ever function. The function of this legislation is to get over those historical and damaging elements of job definition, job description, that have put women in some jobs, men in others and paid men more. That is the purpose of this legislation. If the member for Ottawa West does not accept the purpose of the legislation, let him vote against the bill. Let him not try to take what content there is out of the legislation.

Mr. Barlow: Perhaps the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) does not understand totally how the construction industry operates. I am sure that the member for London South (Ms. E. J. Smith) could help us explain this and I am sure she will be supporting us on this amendment.

Mr. Breaugh: Why do you not sit down and let her do that?

Mr. Barlow: I will give her an opportunity; let me finish first. The industry operates on province-wide bargaining based on the fact that the employees, male or female, who work outside are not normally there 12 months of the year. They work only in the good weather. They have much time off because of weather conditions. Their rates have been negotiated on that basis. Those who work inside, whether they are male or female, whether the estimator, the payroll clerk is male or female, are there on a

12-month basis. They are working year round, the same as in most other industries.

In formulating this amendment, we are isolating only the construction industry although there was representation before the committee of many other types of industries, the food service industry and others that felt they should be included in this functional-nonfunctional. We are isolating only the construction industry. It is something that should be able to help the construction industry adapt to the realities of this bill. We are trying on this particular item to make it a more acceptable, understandable and operational bill, to make it a more workable bill.

Mr. Baetz: Might I add one more comment? I was impressed and temporarily encouraged by the comments made by the parliamentary assistant during the committee hearings when he admitted, and I think Hansard will show that he did admit, that the construction industry maybe did have a point here and that maybe this would create problems for them later down the line.

But he said: "We will be setting up a commission of bureaucrats. If it does create problems, then they can look into it and, in their great judicious way they can finally decide, after years of aggravation, after years of expense, fighting this by the construction industry, to then change the legislation or change the regulations."

When I heard that I assumed that when we got to this stage in the development of this bill the parliamentary assistant, aided by the wisdom and the experience which the member for, which is it, London North,—

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Ms. E. J. Smith: London South.

Mr. Baetz: —London South, of course, yes; that the member for London South has about the construction industry that surely she would have persuaded the parliamentary assistant and the governing party that, yes, the construction industry has a point of view and, yes indeed, we can include this amendment in here. It is not going to exempt the construction industry from this legislation, that is very clear. It is not going to exempt it.

The member for Ottawa Centre would like us to believe that is a sly way for the construction industry to be exempted. It does not do it.

Anyway, I am looking forward to the parliamentary assistant now telling us that, yes, he has been to the mountain of the construction industry, and he has now been persuaded by them and by some of the great citizens that are operating in that field.

Mr. Ward: The government will not be supporting this amendment. I would only point out that the amendment, as put forward, relates to an employment sector whose total female work force represents three per cent of its total employees, if you want to put into context the impact that pay equity legislation would have on this particular sector. That is the first point I would make.

The second point I would make is that it should be noted that the construction industry is not the only industry that has province-wide bargaining. In fact, many hospital employees also have province-wide bargaining. Notwithstanding that fact, it should be remembered that unionized employers neither exercise direct control over the rates of pay provided to workers, nor do they determine individual hiring.

Frankly, I think we had a good debate on this particular subject in committee and, again, here. We will not be supporting this amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the amendment of Mr. Baetz adding a new subsection (1a) carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

Mr. Chairman: Since we will not be going back into the House until six o'clock I would like to advise the members that pursuant to standing order 30, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given last week by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara). This matter will be debated at six o'clock today.

PAY EQUITY ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ SALARIALE (continued/continué)

On section 2:

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Ward moves that section 2 of the bill be amended by striking out "equal pay" wherever it occurs and inserting in lieu thereof "pay equity."

Any comments, parliamentary assistant?

Mr. Ward: No, I do not think so. I think it makes it consistent with the amendments we put in committee.

Ms. Gigantes: We will not oppose this amendment. It is certainly consistent with the approach of the legislation. This legislation does

not provide equal pay for work of equal value and it should not pretend to. It provides a formula called "pay equity," and that is what it should be called whenever it is addressed in the bill.

Mr. Baetz: We too will be supporting this amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the motion by Mr. Ward amending section 2 carry?

Motion agreed to.

Section 2, as amended, agreed to.

On section 3:

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that subsection 3(1) of the bill be amended by striking out "who employ 10 or more employees" in the second line.

Ms. Gigantes: This bill has a long list of exclusions and exemptions which amount to noncoverage for women. As we have gone through discussion of the bill in the standing committee on administration of justice, we have been able to try to make estimates of how many women out of the two million who are at work in Ontario may be excluded from the provisions and the potential benefits of this legislation.

This group referred to in subsection 3(1) is the group of women who work for employers who have fewer than 10 employees. What we know about this group of women in Ontario is that, as of 1985, there were 238,800 of them working in Ontario. They are women employed by what we call small employers, employers of fewer than 10 people, and they have none of the benefits provided, or supposed to be provided, to other women under this legislation.

They cannot even go to the Pay Equity Commission under this legislation and make a complaint. It is not just that they do not have available to them the proactive provisions of this legislation, which in some work places would create plans which would be either employer-developed or developed jointly by employers and unions, where there are unions. These will be women for whom none of the provisions, not even the complaint mechanism, would be available.

These women are probably representative of a large number of minority-group women. By that I mean women in the visible minorities of Ontario or women who are immigrants. From both groups, we have had representation that indicates how important it is for the women involved to have access to this legislation. From both groups, we have had a very strong indication that coverage, and the coverage of small employers, employers who have fewer

than 10 employees, is absolutely critical so that women from these minority groups can receive benefits.

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I will just read a couple of statements that have been presented to us. One is from the Chinese Canadian National Council and it says: "It would be highly unfair that workers who work for small companies would not be able to enjoy the full benefits of Ontario law. To apply size restrictions on the application of pay equity would be analogous to limiting the coverage of minimum wage regulations to companies of a certain size."

In a brief that has been developed by the Coalition of Visible Minority Women, the indication is similarly strong. They say: "The government is considering excluding small businesses from the legislation. However, 40 per cent of women in Ontario work in establishments with less than 20 employees." They go on to say, "We call for the legislation to include all employers." They indicate a very strong need on the part of such groups of women to have legislation that will provide them with access to the benefits, however limited those benefits may be, of this legislation.

I would also like to point out to members of the Legislature that if we say that employers who have fewer than 10 employees do not have to worry about this legislation because it does not affect their work places, we are saying that 85 per cent of the firms in Ontario are not covered by this legislation. It seems quite an astonishing fact, but it is true that 85 per cent of the firms operating in Ontario have fewer than 10 employees.

The parliamentary assistant has told the justice committee that many of those firms are one-person or two-person firms, which indeed is true.

An hon. member: Or no person.

Ms. Gigantes: They may be no-person firms, says the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan). That too is true. However, we know there are 238,800 women as of 1985 who work in such firms. We would like to assure them of at least equal access to this legislation for whatever it is worth in terms of what it could do for them. At least they should have the right to make a complaint to the Pay Equity Commission. That is the purpose of this amendment. It would say that the legislation applies to all employers in Ontario.

Mr. Baetz: I can agree that, philosophically, one could argue that by not including in this bill employees in companies with fewer than 10 employees, they are being discriminated against.

But I think we should look upon this piece of legislation in its proper perspective and in a historical perspective. We have agreed, during this first leap forward, to include not only the public sector but also a very large proportion of the private sector. As some people here will know only too well, there was a lot of questioning and a lot of concern as to whether the private sector should be included at all in this piece of legislation at this stage in time.

I think for the time being the very small employers, people who really have no huge personnel offices, no employee benefits counsel and people to advise them in all this, no resources such as that, should be excluded. What we are really saying is that half a loaf is better than none or that we learn to walk before we run.

While I have no philosophical difference of opinion on this one, I think in a very pragmatic, practical way it would be very unfortunate if at this first stroke of legislation we were to include some 253,000 very small employers in Ontario. It would create a horrendous nightmare, a headache and what not. I will certainly not be supporting the amendment for that very simple reason. It is simply practically impossible, unpractical, and we shall be opposing the amendment.

Mr. Mackenzie: I have been provoked into rising in this debate by the remarks we have just heard. It is not a question of walking before we can run or even crawling before we can walk. What we are doing with this amendment is practising some real discrimination. We have 238,000 women, better than 10 per cent of the working women in Ontario, automatically excluded by this one amendment alone.

What the member has done, regardless of all the arguments he may want, is said that they are second-class workers, in terms of their rights to pay. I do not think that is right at all. In fact, this bill only covers about 15 per cent of the companies and firms in Ontario. It seems to me we cannot make the argument that we have to look out only for the employers. That is obviously a concern in a situation like this, but I would ask the member for Ottawa West: What about the employees when we practise discrimination and we automatically exclude this many women workers in Ontario? Are we saying it is all right that they are second-class employees? It seems to me we may very well have a charter case here.

Mr. Baetz: I do not want to prolong this particular argument, but when the member for Hamilton East talks about discriminating against

all these women who happen to be employed by very small employers, he forgets that in the great socialist province of Manitoba they have discriminated against all of the women in the private sector the first time around, and for understandable reasons.

I think we have to go at this legislation in a very straightforward, practical, pragmatic manner. We are pioneering new ground, new frontiers. Let us do it methodically. That would be the position of our party.

An hon. member: If you supported pay equity, which you don't.

Mr. Chairman: Order. If the member for Oriole wishes to debate, she must stand in her place.

An hon. member: That would be the position of your party if you supported pay equity.

Mr. Chairman: Order. I must remind the members that I can neither see nor hear those who are not in their seats.

Shall the amendment of Ms. Gigantes to subsection 3(1) of the act carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: The next amendment I have is really a note. What do you want to do about that?

Ms. Gigantes: Disregard it.

Mr. Chairman: We simply disregard that. Thank you.

1650

The next one is an amendment to section 6 by Mr. Baetz.

Ms. Gigantes: Do not worry about it. It is just a reminder to us.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, I guess. It is a little unusual to me, these notes about if this happens, then that happens. Ms. Gigantes's note, which was tabled, is a note re subsection 3(2), and it says, "If the motion to amend subsection 3(1) passes, subsection 3(2) becomes redundant," etc., but we do not—

Mr. McClellan: We will have to return to the section if the amendment carries.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, but at this point we do not know.

Ms. Gigantes: It is just a reminder to us.

Mr. Chairman: To whom?

Mr. McClellan: If the amendment carries when we get to division, we can come back to it tomorrow. I am sure it will carry.

Mr. Chairman: All right.

Sections 4 and 5 agreed to.

On section 6:

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Baetz moves that section 6 of the bill be amended by adding the following new subsection thereto:

“6(1a) For the purposes of this act, comparisons cannot be made between job classes within an establishment within the same geographical division or divisions if such job classes within such establishments are engaged in the provision of dissimilar products or services.”

Mr. Baetz: This again is an appeal from the private sector that, to the fullest extent possible, this bill make common sense and that it can be understood and respected.

In this particular case, we are making an appeal for such employers as Canteen of Canada Ltd., Cara Operations, Eastwood Food Services and VS Services Ltd. A distinguishing feature of the operations of employers like these is that they carry on several distinct lines of business in which their employees are working in a large number of separate work places scattered across the province. There would be relatively few employees in each of these work places.

With Bill 154 as it now defines the terms “establishment” and “geographic division,” it will require this type of enterprise to treat all its employees within a given municipality or county as one unit for the purposes of implementing pay equity, notwithstanding that these employees may be engaged in different types of businesses subject to different competitive pressures, with the employees being represented by different trade unions.

We have gone through this before. Once again, as far as the committee is concerned, with the accord between the government and the third party, the committee has decided not to listen to this sector of private enterprise. We are appealing in this last minute, in the 11th hour, that we listen to them and agree that maybe they have a sensible and reasonable point of view to offer.

With this last appeal here, I have to plead particularly to the parliamentary assistant, because I do not expect I will be getting any support whatever from the socialist party here—not one speck of it. I appeal, really, to the government to support us and to say to the private sector, “Yes, we know what you are talking about; you have a point of view, and we are going to listen and

support it,” by supporting this amendment and disregarding the socialist party over there.

Ms. Gigantes: As proud spokesperson on this matter for “the socialist party over there,” I would like to point out that the member for Ottawa West does not seem to have any support from his front bench for the kind of havoc he is trying to wreak with what is after all a pretty weak-kneed bill.

We had all these characters from the food service industry come before the justice committee, and members should have heard the weeping and wailing and scrimping of pennies they have to go through to make their operations profitable. They simply could not afford to have one outlet within Metro Toronto compared with another outlet doing a slightly different kind of service. No, no, no.

It all breaks one’s heart until one looks at their revenue sheets, where they have net revenues of millions and millions of dollars per year. How do members think these operations got so big? Part of the way they got so big was making extra profits by discriminating in pay levels to women employees.

This bill is a very limited bill in terms of what it would force such companies to go through. It would force them to compare each other within Metro Toronto, for example, as a geographic division. It would not force them to compare their operations in Hamilton with their operations in Metro. Oh, no.

Let me tell members, given what is in the bill—this is what the Weir and Foulds client news bulletin addressed to business people has to offer in April 1987:

“The term ‘establishment’ does not relate to a single location but rather to a geographic division, such as the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. The term ‘geographic division’ is defined to mean a county, territory, district or regional municipality described in the Territorial Division Act.”

Members can tell how easy this is going to be for women, to make work for them.

“For example, a corporation with a warehouse in Guelph and an office headquarters in another location in the Guelph area would be considered one establishment. However, if the same employer had a warehouse in Oakville, it would not be necessary for the jobs in Oakville to be compared with the jobs in Guelph.”

Now the member for Ottawa West is telling us they should not even have to compare one part of their operation within Metro Toronto to another. Good grief.

Mr. Ward: We will not be supporting this amendment. I believe the intent of the amendment is to establish a functional definition which would only serve to eliminate thousands of job comparisons and would openly encourage employers to structure their corporations in such a manner as to escape coverage under this bill.

I now think I understand the Tory position of supporting the bill in principle, because had we adopted all their amendments, the Ontario women's directorate advises me that this bill would apply to 126 women in Ontario.

Mr. Barlow: Oh, come on. Let's not be childish.

Mr. Mackenzie: That is about it.

Mr. Chairman: Order.

Ms. Gigantes: This kind of amendment is so bad it makes the Liberal bill look half decent.

Mr. Breagh: Careful now.

Mr. Chairman: With that praise, the member for Ottawa West.

Mr. Baetz: The comments that have been coming from over here on this particular amendment and earlier amendments—

Mr. Breagh: Oh, come on, Reuben. Sit down.

Mr. Baetz: —and a few comments that maybe are not on the record but that I heard, I say to the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breagh); maybe he and I will have a little talk later.

Mr. Breagh: Any time, Reuben, any time. You get your wheelchair and we will go at it.

Mr. Baetz: Does the member want to have it recorded here?

Mr. Breagh: Sure.

Mr. Baetz: The very fact that we are simply saying that perhaps the business community, the private employer who will be playing a major role in this, may have something sensible to say here is ridiculed and treated with the greatest of disdain by the third party and, unfortunately, to a very great degree also by the governing party. Having made that point, we will let the case rest. We know the amendment will be defeated.

1700

Mr. Ward: I do want to withdraw my facetious remark about the 126 women as being an accurate reflection of the statistics. The point I was trying to make through exaggeration was that I believe the amendments being put forward broaden the exemptions so significantly as to virtually make the bill totally ineffective.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the amendment of Mr. Baetz to section 6 carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Baetz: Mr. Chairman, I look for some technical guidance from you. In view of the fact that we have not voted, we do not know whether or not the earlier amendment is defeated. If it is defeated, obviously this subsection would be redundant. What do we do with it? Do we stand it down or what?

Mr. Chairman: I believe you would move it. The third party is in the same position with regard to a previously stacked amendment.

Ms. Gigantes: If the member is undecided, I am ready to move to section 7.

Mr. Chairman: I think you should put it in and then it can be withdrawn later on, as the vote on the first one goes.

Mr. Baetz moves that subsection 6(4) of the bill be amended by adding the following new clause:

"(c) for job classes on construction projects falling within the definitions of the construction industry contained in subsection 1(e) of the Labour Relations Act, shall be made between job classes within the same geographic division or divisions as the case may be."

I again remind all members to say nothing unless they are in their seats and then only when it is in order.

Interjection.

Mr. Chairman: The member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) is out of order.

Mr. Ward: But he is in his seat.

Mr. Chairman: He is still out of order.

Mr. Baetz: I do not think it requires any further comment. It simply deals with the construction industry and the fact that the onsite construction employees are to be treated in a different way from those in the head office. We will just have to see how the initial amendment is treated.

Ms. Gigantes: I wonder if the member for Ottawa West is addressing the right amendment. What this amendment says is:

"(c) for job classes on construction projects falling within the definitions of the construction industry contained in subsection 1(e) of the Labour Relations Act, shall be made between job classes within the same geographic division or divisions as the case may be."

Clearly, what the written word and the way he presented it suggest is that he is going to insist the comparisons be made only within a geographic division. This is for the purposes of a construction industry which he has talked about as operating on a provincial level in a previous amendment.

Further, I do not understand what this amendment is purporting to do, because the bill already calls for job classes within the same geographic division to be the limiting factor in terms of comparison. Perhaps he could elucidate for us.

Mr. Breagh: I think he just did.

Mr. Chairman: Order. Shall the amendment of Mr. Baetz to subsection 6(4) carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

On section 7:

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that section 7 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

"(3) No employer shall enter into any agreement or arrangement or do any thing that defeats or is intended to defeat the purpose of this act."

Ms. Gigantes: Section 7 is one in which the obligations of employers and bargaining agents are laid out.

Subsection 7(1) calls upon every employer to "establish and maintain compensation practices that provide for pay equity in every establishment of the employer." That is up until the achievement of pay equity, which we will address in a further motion.

Subsection 7(2) says, "No employer or bargaining agent shall bargain for or agree to compensation practices that, if adopted, would cause a contravention of subsection (1)." That is fair and good.

However, there are going to be some employers who will use the loopholes we have discussed in earlier parts of this bill to attempt to subvert the purposes of the bill; they will manipulate job classes and they will take one enterprise and split it into two so they do not have to do job comparisons that would make them responsible for pay equity adjustments to female employees.

There are a number of ways which we have provided in this legislation, and which the government refuses to close as loopholes, whereby employers can undertake initiatives—which I am sure some will be capable of doing—that will undermine the very purpose of this legislation.

There is ample precedent in our legislation in such matters as taxation legislation and employment standards to provide a kind of bad-apple provision. That means that when somebody can clearly be found to be using various iniquitous means of trying to defeat the application of the legislation, that person can be called to account for attempting to subvert the purposes of the legislation. That is what this amendment would provide.

Because so many women in Ontario do not have representation by labour unions, when the commission or the tribunal discovers a case where an employer has attempted time after time to manipulate the legislation and to work his or her way around the legislation, it is terribly important that the tribunal and the commission, alerted to that problem, should have a general wording in this legislation which can allow them to provide discipline for an employer who is attempting to undermine the legislation. That is why we have put forward this amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 7(3) of the bill carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

1710

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that section 7 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

"(4) Every employer shall make available to the employer's employees all the information necessary to allow them to exercise their rights and responsibilities under this act, including information on job classifications, job descriptions and rates of compensation."

Ms. Gigantes: For many hundreds of thousands of women in Ontario there will not be access to an equal pay plan. Look, I made a mistake, I called it equal pay. It is not equal pay; it is pay equity, it is the formula called pay equity that we have set out in this legislation.

Regardless of that, many thousands of women employees in the province will not have the benefit of a plan which they can consider. They will work for firms with fewer than 100 employees. Of the two million women who are at work in Ontario, over 500,000 or over one quarter of them work for firms which have fewer than 100 employees and therefore they work for employers who will not be called upon to provide pay equity plans.

For those women and indeed for women who are working in firms which will have pay equity plans, it is terribly important that they have information available from the employer which allows them to assess whether the legislation is working for them. There is no way that a woman in an ordinary work place can tell whether her job is comparable to another job unless she has information about the job description of another job and unless she has information about the job rates of other job classes.

A large measure of the success of this legislation will come from the enforcement by women employees of their own rights under the legislation. If we are expecting them to be able to take advantage of those rights, we are going to have to provide that they have the very basic kinds of information about their work place that only their employers can provide.

We feel it incumbent on the government to make this very elemental provision in the legislation so women will be able to use the legislation and make sure they get some benefit from the legislation. They cannot do that without information on their work place.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Ms. Gigantes's motion to amend subsection 7(4) of the bill carry?

I would remind members that those nos are coming awfully late.

Ms. Gigantes: It is carried.

Mr. Chairman: No, I heard a no; two of them.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: The next one I have is clause 8(1)(f).

Mr. Baetz moves that subsection 8(1) of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following clause:

"(f) A provincial agreement as defined in section 137 of the Labour Relations Act."

Mr. Baetz: As I indicated on the previous amendment, this refers again to the onsite construction workers who come under the Labour Relations Act. Simply, if the previous amendment carries then there is some relevance to this. If it does not, and I think we expect it will not, this amendment would be redundant. I am caught in the same situation here, but I do not think there is anything much more to be said about this at this point in time.

Mr. Barlow: I hate to disagree with my colleague the member for Ottawa West, but I am not so sure that these amendments will not carry. After all, there are members of the government who are free-enterprise, free-thinking members who are not in the House at the present time. I am sure my colleague will realize that when these people come in, they might have some influence on some of the other members of the government party.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Mr. Baetz's amendment to subsection 8(1) of the bill carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

Mr. Chairman: Next is subsection 9(1).

Ms. Gigantes: Mr. Chairman, I think you have a note that we wish to have a division on subsection 8(2).

Mr. Chairman: Is this one of these notes or recommendations?

Ms. Gigantes: We are prepared to move up through the bill to subsection 8(2). I would like to speak to subsection 8(2).

Mr. Chairman: The member wishes to make comments on subsection 8(2)?

Ms. Gigantes: I do indeed.

Without going through all the details of this bill, let me simply say that what it says is that once you have defined what a work place is and what an establishment is, once you have defined whether an employer has to pay attention to this legislation at all, once you have defined when he or she has to pay attention to it and once you have provided that there is a 60 per cent female work class that can be compared to a 70 per cent male work class or job class; once you do all that and you lay out the job comparability, the rate of pay differential that can be defined as requiring a pay equity adjustment under this legislation, and then you wait for the many years of the unfolding of one per cent of payroll payments by the employer to address that pay inequity, once you have done all that and you have finally got to the point where women, having run through all these tests and having waited all this time, finally end up with the same rate of pay as men who are doing comparable jobs—that can take over a decade under this legislation without any trouble—once you have done all that, what the bill says is, "After pay equity has been achieved in an establishment, this act does not apply so as to prevent differences in compensation between a

female job class and a male job class if the employer is able to show that the difference is the result of differences in bargaining strength."

That is subsection 8(2). What this means is that all this mechanism we are setting up will come to a conclusion at a flash in time, at a moment in time, when suddenly, years later, something is achieved called pay equity within the particular establishment. The woman who had been underpaid and does a job of the same value as the man's will finally get her wage rate up to the same level, and after that, nothing, because the employer can turn around and say: "There is a wage gap growing there again year by year. What had been inequitable and then became equitable is becoming inequitable again. But no problem. The reason for it, according to subsection 8(2), is that there is a difference that is the result of a difference in bargaining strength."

How did we get to this problem? I ask the parliamentary assistant, if it was not a difference in bargaining strength and so-called market forces that we all know are downright discrimination in a very large portion of the wage gap, then why are we facing inequity? Why are we facing this discrimination? Employers have always called it a difference in bargaining strength. They have always called it labour market forces. We know perfectly well that if you compare the value of jobs to the employer, to one employer in one work place, there is discrimination going on.

1720

This legislation says that once we have gone through all this enormous ritual and the Liberals have beaten their breasts and said, "How wonderful we are, how wonderful we are; we have achieved pay equity," then it can all be undone by something called a difference in bargaining strength. I do not know how anyone can defend that.

Do we then have to bring in new legislation and start the whole process all over again? It does not make sense. If it is to be done, let it be done, however inadequately done, but do not undo it after.

We recommend that members vote against subsection 8(2).

Mr. Chairman: Now you want to discuss subsections 8(3) and 8(4)?

Ms. Gigantes: I will be glad to discuss 8(3) and 8(4).

As I mentioned earlier, there are enormous loopholes, exemptions, areas of noncoverage and so on in this legislation, and this is one that bothers me most. This and the contracting-out

section are the ones that I think are not only neutral in terms of the effect of this legislation—in other words, they may not be of much benefit to women—but also, combined with the contracting-out provision which exists in the legislation unless we change the definition we moved the first amendment on, this section can actually help undermine the situation of women in the work place.

Subsections 8(3) and 8(4) provide definitions of part-time work and casual work for the purpose of saying that part-time work which is regular shall be included within the provisions of this legislation, but casual work which is on-call or is irregular or is less than one third of regular working hours will not be included under the provisions of this legislation.

That presents an enormous problem for hundreds of thousands of women. About 500,000 of the two million women who work in Ontario are part-time workers, a lot of them not because they want to work part-time but because that is the only employment they can get. We are talking about one quarter, 500,000, of the women who work.

If we are going to define "part-time worker" and "casual worker" in different ways and say that a regular part-time worker is included in the employer's responsibility under this legislation but a casual, irregular, on-call worker is not included under this legislation, we are setting up an inducement for employers to shift work which has been part-time, regular and more than one third of regular hours, to casual, on-call, irregular work.

Members will note that this is the only section in this bill in which, instead of discussing positions and job classes, we are discussing employees. We are discussing the way employees work, the way they provide their services. We are discussing whether they work full-time, or normal hours, or whether they are working less than one third of normal hours. What we are doing is setting up one big temptation for employers to start reducing the hours of work of people who have been providing part-time work on a regular basis so that the employer does not have to bear any responsibility for those people under this legislation.

If, as I fear, there are going to be hundreds of thousands of women who will move from the insecure position of being part-time employees to the less secure position, the more vulnerable position of being casual, on-call employees, then this bill, by making that exemption provision for employers, will actually have undermined the

work situation for large numbers of the female work force. I cannot believe that any government in this day and age would really want to do that.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that subsections 8(2), 8(3) and 8(4) be deleted from the bill.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Vote stacked.

On section 9:

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Gigantes moves that subsection 9(1) of the bill be amended by inserting, after "reduce" in the first line and in the second line, "or restrain."

Ms. Gigantes: I will read subsection 9(1) as it is now printed in the bill: "An employer shall not reduce the compensation payable to any employee or reduce the rate of compensation for any position in order to achieve pay equity."

Essentially, what that means is that if the jobs of women are being compared to the jobs of men, an employer shall not be determined to have provided pay equity if he reduces the pay of men. That is fair and good, absolutely vital, but unless we have a recognition of the fact that the employer may restrain wages in this section, what we will have is a situation where employers will call upon men and women in the work place to pay for pay equity adjustments.

Let me go back a few months in time. Mr. Chairman, you will recollect that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), the minister responsible for women's issues, spoke to a group of employers here in the city of Toronto several months back. He put to them the following proposition: they should not be worried about the cost of pay equity adjustments they would be required to make under this legislation because those costs he described to them as one per cent of total payroll per year. That is accurate. But he said to them:

"For example, if you were proposing or if you thought you might give your employees a wage increase this coming year of say three per cent, then if you were called upon to make a contribution of one per cent of total payroll to the payment of pay equity adjustments to your female employees in the coming year, what you could do is offer all your employees a two per cent increase instead of three per cent and then use the other one per cent to provide pay equity adjustments."

1730

The Attorney General, when he came back into the Legislature the next day, was asked by

me whether he had actually said that. I could hardly believe he would suggest that. I said to people, "I do not believe he suggested that." In fact, he said he had not said it. He told us no, he had been misunderstood. This was the Attorney General, the minister responsible for women's issues, the well-known member for St. David.

He said he had been misunderstood and that really what he meant to say to the employers, what people should have understood and what the Globe and Mail reporter in this case should have understood was that he was saying to employers that one per cent of payroll contribution to pay equity adjustments was not very much to ask and that one per cent a year was probably much less than they thought.

In fact, when we heard the tape of his remarks it was quite clear what he had said. He had said to the employers, "If you are thinking of giving your employees in total a three per cent total payroll wage increase for the coming year, reduce it to two per cent and allocate the other one per cent of total payroll to your pay equity adjustments." That is precisely how he encouraged employers to think of how to apply this legislation, and it is this section of the legislation that will allow them to do it.

All we have to do is to make sure employees would at least have the opportunity to say: "We do not feel we should be bearing the cost of pay equity adjustments when it is the employer who has benefited from pay discrimination for year after year up until now. We feel the employer should be paying the cost of pay equity adjustments."

All we have to do to provide at least the opening for employees to go to the Pay Equity Commission to try to present a case, which would not be an easy case to present, to make what arguments they could before the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal, is to amend it so that it reads, "An employer shall not reduce or restrain the compensation payable to any employee or reduce or restrain the rate of compensation for any position in order to achieve pay equity."

It seems to me the very elemental question that faces us here is who is going to pay for pay equity? I ask why a woman who has suffered pay discrimination for years should have to contribute to the cost of her own pay equity adjustment. I ask why she should have to take a lower annual wage increase so that the employer can turn to her and say, "Here is a little package that is called a pay equity adjustment."

How does that benefit her? Will her male colleagues not be glad to help to contribute to her

pay equity adjustment? Will her female colleagues who may not be eligible for pay equity adjustments not be grateful to give up some of their annual wage increase to pay for her pay equity adjustment when it is the employer who should be paying those adjustments? It is the employer who has had the benefit of discrimination for years.

If ever there was a case where we should change legislation to at least provide an avenue for a woman, a group of women or a union representing women to go before a tribunal and argue that there is wage restraint going on here that presents real unfairness in the work place, this is it.

Mr. McClellan: I think we are entitled to a response from the parliamentary assistant. This is an important section of the bill and it is an important issue. I think we can have some debate.

Mr. Ward: I would be pleased to respond to the member for Ottawa Centre. I will just mention to the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) that, again, this amendment was put in the justice committee and was debated at length. No doubt the member would like to see passage of this legislation as protracted as possible, but I would say to my colleague from—

Mr. McClellan: I beg you pardon. What did the parliamentary assistant say?

Ms. Gigantes: He said we would like to delay passage.

Mr. Ward: I did not say anything of the sort, quite frankly. In response to the member for Ottawa Centre—

Interjections.

Mr. Chairman: Order.

Mr. McClellan: He has imputed motives while you sat there, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: No. Order. What I heard the parliamentary assistant say was that members would not want to prolong or protract.

Mr. McClellan: That is not what he said at all.

Mr. Chairman: I heard it in the opposite to the way you appeared to. I did not see it that he was imputing motives.

Mr. McClellan: You misheard.

Mr. Warner: He accused us of trying to delay the bill.

Mr. Chairman: No, I heard quite the opposite. Would you clarify what you did say?

Mr. Ward: Frankly, I understood the member for Bellwoods to indicate, in fact, that the

government was not willing to debate this legislation. I was reminding the member that we had a lengthy discussion in committee on this very point and on this very same amendment and I thought that the member for Bellwoods wanted this debate protracted and wanted further debate.

If I misunderstood the member, then I withdraw, but I understood that he was accusing us of not wanting to debate this legislation when, in fact, he was attempting to provoke me to enter into the debate. I am not quite sure what it is the member for Bellwoods is looking for.

Mr. McClellan: Just for the record, I would like the member to do the member for Ottawa Centre the courtesy, if it is not too much trouble, of responding to the very important points that she just made.

Mr. Ward: As I indicated to the member for Ottawa Centre and the member for Bellwoods, we debated this at length in committee, and I responded at length to the member in committee. She is well aware of that. I would be happy to provide members of the third party with copies of Hansard on the committee debate if they are interested in that.

Ms. Gigantes: I believe the parliamentary assistant is ashamed to stand in his place and say what he said in committee in a House where there are more members and in a House where, fortunately, people in the public who are at home and have the interest can see what he is saying. He should stand up, take three minutes and just tell us why he thinks employers should be allowed to put the cost for pay equity on employees.

Mr. Ward: The member for Ottawa Centre knows that the bill clearly indicates that wages cannot be reduced in an effort to achieve pay equity. It seems to me that just a few moments ago she was up on her feet talking about bargaining strength and indicating, on the basis of some argument that she now seems to be presenting, that it is okay to find an excuse for discriminatory wage practices.

That is on the basis, I suppose, that male employees, when faced with the prospect of a higher rate of increase or compensation on the part of female employees within the same establishment—I assume the member for Ottawa Centre feels that it would be appropriate to object to those kinds of wage adjustments on the basis that it could be argued that any increase to a female employee at a rate above and beyond that of a male employee, in fact, represents a restraint of wages. I do not accept that argument.

Ms. Gigantes: Does the parliamentary assistant think that women who have suffered pay discrimination should, through restraint of their wages, be called upon to pay for their own pay equity adjustments? Does he think that the men they work alongside should suffer restraint of their wages in order to provide those pay equity adjustments?

Does he think that women who will not be eligible for pay equity adjustments under this legislation, perhaps because they are being fairly paid or perhaps because they are excluded under the provisions of this legislation, should pay the cost, through wage restraint, of pay equity adjustments made to women who have suffered pay discrimination in the past?

1740

Mr. Ward: No, I do not think any of those things and I believe the member for Ottawa Centre knows full well that I do not agree with any of those premises. Again, when we discussed this item in committee, I think on more than one occasion we talked about this great difficulty relating to the wage gap in its broadest terms.

It may well be that, in the perfect world of the member for Ottawa Centre, she can clearly identify some villain out there to whom we can assign all the responsibility for the great economic injustice that has been perpetrated upon the working women in this province. I for one do not believe there is one villain out there.

I believe we all have a responsibility, employers, employees and government, to play a role in the redress of wage discrimination within this province. If the member for Ottawa Centre finds it totally inappropriate that wage adjustments may go at an accelerated level to working women in order to achieve pay equity within this province at an accelerated rate—maybe she has a problem with that, but I do not.

Mr. Mackenzie: I would remind the member for Wentworth North (Mr. Ward) that he is in a committee of the whole House. It does not necessarily mean that because there has been debate in a committee of the House that there is not the right to have debate and to have it heard here in the House on a piece of legislation as important as I think this particular piece of legislation is.

I would also suggest to my friend that by not taking at least a look at the suggestions my colleague has made, reduce or restrain and some of the other arguments she made, what he is inviting is the biggest extension of red-circling of rates in jobs across this province that this

province has ever seen. If he does not think that is going to cause him some problems, he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. Ward: For the last time, I would just like to indicate to my colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) that I have listened at length to the positions put forward by the member for Ottawa Centre. I believe I have in fact heard them; on some we have agreed, on some we have disagreed. I will stand by my last response with regard to what I believe to be the fundamental crux of the problem we are trying to address. I for one do not believe there is a single individual in this province or a single group in this province that is exempt from some responsibility to participate in redressing the wage gap.

Ms. Gigantes: Can the parliamentary assistant please indicate to this House why it is that a woman who has suffered pay discrimination, and it is determined under the meagre provisions of this legislation that she has suffered pay discrimination, should then have her wages restrained in order to contribute to the pay equity adjustment she is going to get from the employer? Can he explain why that is fair?

Mr. Ward: The member knows there is no provision in the bill that requires anybody to have her wages restrained.

Ms. Gigantes: The point is that the minister responsible for women's issues, the Attorney General—and this parliamentary assistant is supporting him by silence—has gone out and told employers to do precisely that. Among the people the parliamentary assistant wants to rope into this contribution to the advancement of women in the work place are the employees of the employer. Among those employees are the women who, presumably, will get some benefit under this legislation.

The member is refusing to put in a measure that would allow an appeal. The very women who are eligible for measures to address the pay discrimination they have suffered are being called upon by the employer to contribute, by wage restraint, to their pay equity adjustments. That is the essence of the matter, and if he does not see this it is wilful blindness.

Mr. Swart: I have not taken part in this debate but if I hear the parliamentary assistant correctly, what he is saying in effect is that his government is quite prepared to see the steps towards pay equity borne entirely by other employees. They do not have to—

Mr. Chairman: Order. It being 5:45 p.m., we will call in the members. I remind the members it is a 10-minute bell.

1755

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 1(1) dealing with "employee," which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 18; nays 65.

Interjections.

Mr. Chairman: Order. The member for Cambridge (Mr. Barlow) is making so much noise his fellow members in front of him cannot hear. Thank you.

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's motion to amend subsection 1(1) of the act dealing with "female job class," which was negated on the same vote.

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 1(1) of the act dealing with "male job class," which was negated on the same vote.

The committee divided on Mr. Baetz's amendment to subsection 1(6), which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 25; nays 58.

The committee divided on Mr. Baetz's motion on subsection 1(1a), which was negated on the same vote.

Section 1 agreed to.

1800

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 3(1) dealing with 10 or more employees, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 18; nays 65.

Section 3 agreed to.

The committee divided on Mr. Baetz's amendment on subsection 6(1a), which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 25; nays 58.

The committee divided on Mr. Baetz's amendment to subsection 6(4), which was negated on the same vote.

Section 6 agreed to.

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 7(3), which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 18; nays 65.

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to subsection 7(4), which was negated on the same vote.

Section 7 agreed to.

The committee divided on Mr. Baetz's amendment on clause 8(1)(f), which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 25; nays 58.

Mr. Chairman: The last motion is by Ms. Gigantes on section 8, deleting those three subsections.

Ms. Gigantes: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: The debate on those motions has not been completed.

Mr. Chairman: I am sorry. The debate was completed and we were on section—

Mr. Ward: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: When we rose we were dealing with an amendment to subsection 9(1).

Mr. Chairman: Yes, that is correct.

The committee divided on Ms. Gigantes's amendment to section 8, deleting subsections 8(2), (3) and (4), which was negated on the same vote.

Section 8 agreed to.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the committee of the whole House reported progress.

CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 30(b), I deem that a motion to adjourn the House has been made. The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) showed dissatisfaction with the answer to a question previously given.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

I will listen to the member for up to five minutes.

Mr. Warner: I will deal first with the answer given in which the minister stated four reasons the board of governors, so he claims, was concerned about having the labour studies program.

Financial costs: the cost statement indicates that in 1986-87 the cost to the college was \$53,293. In the previous year it was \$63,806.75; in the year before that it was \$59,815.01. The average cost is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$50,000 to \$60,000 which is not exorbitant.

Lack of control over operations: no one I have spoken to seems to understand what he is talking about.

Lack of control over program quality: the minister should be reminded this issue has never been raised by the college with the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto. Every course receives approval by the college in the same way as every other course offered by the college. The council and the college had a revised agreement which was signed earlier this year, and at that time no problems were raised by the college with

respect to the agreement, the agreement having been in place since December 1983.

The agreement, I remind the minister, sets out the structure, the location, the role of the advisory committee and the role and responsibility of the labour council.

The status of the centre, which he raises as a problem, is specified in the negotiated agreement which was signed between the two parties. The agreement that was signed is no different in style or format from any other agreement the college signs with a private company. The college, I remind him, has never raised any problems in its negotiations over the time from 1983 to 1987.

It is important for the centre to be associated with the college. The college pays for three staff people, but the labour council participates in the hiring. The advisory committee of the labour council is able to determine the needs of the labour movement, involve labour educators and start up the appropriate courses. If the centre disappears, so will English in the work place, a course which is funded at present through Ontario basic skills, a program of this government. The program is able to be sold to private companies because it is under the auspices of the college, and once the auspices disappear so does the program.

The concept of allowing labour courses to be offered simply as other courses among the wide variety of continuing education courses has never worked anywhere that it has been tried.

1810

The minister should be reminded of the determination made under a grievance award. This comes from the college affairs branch of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities in April 1987, in which it is stated as the arbitrator's decision:

"There is no dispute that the centre needs the endorsement and participation of the council"—meaning the Metro labour council—"in order to carry out its objectives of providing a vehicle for the organization and administration of labour education courses with and through the trade union movement in Metropolitan Toronto. Without the council, the college and the centre would have no entrée into the trade union movement."

This is the arbitration decision, reached through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, which the minister is now deciding to refute.

The minister states he should not be interfering, autonomy does not come without responsibility. This minister found it appropriate to interfere with Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology when it threatened to remove the

dental hygienist program. Within a couple of days he had contacted Durham College and told it that it must not remove the program, and of course it complied.

The minister has managed to upset a long list of people including the Canadian Auto Workers, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of Canada, the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, the Canadian Union of Educational Workers, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Nurses' Association, the Public Service Alliance of Canada, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, the Canadian Labour Congress.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Warner: I need more time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: The Minister of Colleges and Universities has up to five minutes to respond.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I have up to five minutes to respond. My very short answer would be that my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere has simply abused standing order 30. He is dissatisfied with the answer in the sense that he disagrees with the policy of the ministry and the decisions being taken, but I fail to see why the answer I gave him on this question a few days ago was not satisfactory.

He has gone through the points and I would just like to respond to them one by one. By the way, this is the late show, not with David Letterman but with David Warner.

I am glad my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is taking advantage of bringing to this forum and this House more information on the Centre for Labour Studies.

I repeat to him and I reiterate once again that the decision as to whether the centre will be funded is not a decision taken by the Minister of Colleges and Universities or the Ministry of Colleges and Universities but the board of governors of Humber College.

My friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere suggests I took a different tack when it came to the dental hygiene program at Durham College. He is wrong. He is not misleading us; he is not putting inaccurate information before this House; he is simply wrong. I did not interfere with the decision at Durham College. I made inquiries and was told there was a consideration of the termination of the dental hygiene program. Then, having examined it, they decided not to do it.

On the very case my funny friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere raises, he says I am taking a different tack with the Centre for Labour Studies. The fact is, as a result of his question in this House, I have agreed to meet with Michael Lyons, the chairman or whatever of the Metropolitan Toronto Labour Council, to hear his views on it. I am not prepared, unless I am in receipt after that meeting of information startlingly different from the information I have now, to try to use the moral suasion of my office to have the decision rescinded.

It simply cannot be the case that every time a member of this House is dissatisfied with a decision of the board of governors of one of our community colleges that he can raise the issue in the House and the minister is prevailed upon to have the decision changed. Our community college system will not run if that is the way in which we choose to do business.

My friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere raises the issue of English in the work place. He is not misleading the House; he is just wrong. Those programs will continue because those programs are not funded through Humber College. They are funded through a program of my Ministry of Skills Development as part of the Ontario basic skills in the work place program, which is funded through Ontario's training strategy. They will continue. They have been approved by my ministry and they will continue.

If my friend is suggesting the withdrawal of the programmatic funding that is currently provided to the centre will mean that all of that work and all of the initiatives of labour in Metropolitan Toronto will go down the drain, he is simply wrong, and he knows it, notwithstand-

ing the fact that for some reason or another he chooses to have the matter debated on a late show. I am glad to be here at his late show, but he is simply wrong.

There are substantial questions that the board of governors of Humber College raised in conjunction with the funding of the centre. It is a very good question indeed to ask whether or not it is appropriate for a college to be a funding agency for an arm's-length centre. They have raised the question; they have considered it. They have the responsibility under the authority of the act and the legislation that governs community colleges to make those decisions.

I am going to listen to Michael Lyons, as I have listened to my friend, but the fact is it would be inappropriate—it would undermine the college system—to simply say that the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is concerned and therefore the decision should be reversed.

The most important point, and I close on this point, is that the very programs he is concerned about losing will be continued within the continuing education department of Humber College. Therefore, the community itself will be appropriately served.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has now expired. There being no further matter to debate—

Mr. Philip: You don't know what has happened in adult education. You have no right to be the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried.

The House adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

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 Baetz, R. C. (Ottawa West PC)
 Barlow, W. W. (Cambridge PC)
 Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Breaugh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Charlton, B. A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
 Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
 Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
 Edighoffer, Hon. H. A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
 Fish, S. A. (St. George PC)
 Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
 Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
 Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
 Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
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 Jackson, C. (Burlington South PC)
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 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
 Mackenzie, R. W. (Hamilton East NDP)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
 McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
 McKessock, R. (Grey L)
 McLean, A. K. (Simcoe East PC)
 Mitchell, R. C. (Carleton PC)
 Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
 Partington, P. (Brock PC)

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)

Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)

Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)

Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)

Smith, E. J. (London South L)

Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (York North L)

Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)

Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)

Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)

Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)

Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)

Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)

Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)

Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)

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